THE LEGACY OF GREECE AND ROME

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PREFACE

This little book is designed as an introductory guide for those who, for one reason or another, are unacquainted with classical antiquity. There is a growing body of intelligent readers in this country, young and old, who are ignorant not merely of the Greek and Latin languages, but of the bare rudiments of the history and civilisations of Greece and Rome. For such Greece and Rome are mere names; if they have ever heard of Pericles or Caesar, they have no conception of what they stand for in the march of human civilisation. Many such persons of both sexes can be found in all classes of society. It is not only the artisan or the teacher, the student at a training college or in the upper forms of secondary schools, who answer to this description; it holds good also of a large number of business men and country gentlemen and their wives and daughters—of all, in short, who either have never received a classical education or whose early incursions into that field failed, as is too often the case, to touch their interest and imagination. This wide-spread indifference to classical antiquity does not always spring from incapacity to appreciate the creations of the Greek and Roman genius. Those of whom I am thinking are not wanting either in intellectual energy or in a sense for the beautiful in literature and art. Nor, assuredly, does the fault lie in the nature of classical studies. It is due simply to

the fact that, despite the array of works that have been written to illustrate those studies, they still appear to the mind of the ordinary person as something remote and alien, irrelevant to the practical interests of the modern time.

I have tried in these pages to show that this is not the case, that Greece and Rome, so far from being "dead," are a living and potent inspiration for all ages. My aim has been, in a rapid survey of the sweep of ancient civilisation, to throw into relief those among its central features which illustrate most clearly its interest for thinking men and women at the present day. I hope that here or there I may succeed in touching the imagination of the general reader. This once done, the history and life of Greece and Rome will be studied in fuller detail and for their own sake.

I have purposely kept the volume within a small compass and avoided any pretension to survey completely even the chief landmarks in ancient civilisation. It is intended to stimulate interest, not to satisfy it. Satisfaction can only be gained by study of larger works dealing with special aspects of the subject and, above all, by direct acquaintance with the master creations of the Greek and Roman genius. These are easily accessible to all in English translations and in the galleries of our National Museum. There the spirit of Greece and Rome still tells its own incomparable tale. I hope that I shall leave the reader with a conviction that he knows little or nothing and a desire to know more. For this reason I have omitted much that is familiar even to elementary students of classical antiquity, and have dwelt somewhat disproportionately on selected aspects of the subject, such as the personal influence of Socrates, the institution of the Roman Empire, or the contrast between the ideals

of Greek philosophy and of the Christian religion. A few of the best and most accessible translations and works of reference are mentioned in the Appendix. The list is very fragmentary; and I have tried not to refer to any book that will not be found in a good Free Library. I have said little about the history of Greek art, for on such a theme words are wasted when every one has free access to the original. "Go to the Elgin Room" is the only counsel of perfection in this matter. On the other hand, I have treated somewhat more fully of Greek philosophy. It is a great error to suppose that the general reader is insensible to the value and interest of speculative ideas. On the contrary, he is very ready to appreciate the masterpieces of Greek thought. Academic teachers of philosophy are too prone to reticence in their subject before popular audiences. A book like Plato's *Republic*, as I have found again and again, appeals at once to the minds even of those otherwise untrained in philosophy. Its study is not only one of the most direct avenues to an appreciation of Greek culture; it is bound to discipline and clarify the reader's powers of judgment on life.

I have endeavoured to avoid writing in such a way as to produce one more of the many "cram-books" on ancient history. The wide field traversed is some protection against this danger. But I trust that teachers as well as students may find suggestions that may prove of service in lectures and class instruction. There are few paragraphs that may not be made the basis of amplification and illustration. The method of arrangement which I have followed may be useful to teachers who are anxious to give their pupils a comprehensive outline of Universal History. I am convinced that this should be attempted in our schools. Few educated people have

any grasp of the sequence and correlation of the various civilisations of history. I wonder how many there are, even among University graduates, who realise clearly in chronological relations the dynasties who built the pyramids, the monuments unearthed by Schliemann at Mycenae or by Layard at Nineveh, the Kings of Israel and Judah, the Punic Wars, the barbarian invasions, the deeds of Mahomet and his successors, the restoration of the Empire under Charlemagne in the West? I think that every boy and girl in our secondary schools should, during at least one year of the course of study, master the outlines of Universal History. They would be thus furnished with a scheme portions of which would afterwards be studied in more detail; they would cease to regard nations or epochs as disjointed units, and learn the broad features of the leading civilisations of world-history. I hope that this book may form an encouragement to those who care to enter upon this endeavour.

This must be my apology for the second chapter, on the Early Civilisations of Egypt, the Middle East, and the Eastern Mediterranean. I have no intention of portraying these civilisations: I merely wish to indicate the context of Greece and Rome in the history of the ancient world. On similar grounds I would attempt to justify the almost hopeless effort to gather up in two brief chapters (VIII and IX) the main threads of interest in the history of the Decline and Fall of Rome.

I have tried throughout to illustrate the significance of ancient civilisation by reference to its influence on modern culture. This is in harmony with the general purpose of the volume. The two concluding chapters (X and XI) are specially devoted to this object. I have there selected a few from many possible lines of illustration, choosing examples that are as widely different

from one another as the influence of Roman civilisation in Britain, of the Imperial system on the Christian Church, of the philosophy of Aristotle on Mediaeval thought, and of the Greek genius on the Revival of Learning.

We are told from time to time that the study of classical antiquity is in these days on its defence. It may be so, yet I cannot easily believe that those who have its interests at heart need feel any serious alarm. The influence of Greek and Roman culture is not confined to those who are privileged to master the languages of Greece and Rome. It holds, in fact, two strongholds against attack. On the one hand, the few chosen spirits who lead the vanguard of humane learning will always turn to Greece and Rome as to a living source of inspiration. But the many can also be enlisted in the service. There is a strange irony in the fact that the life of these peoples who were gifted above all others to express what is of universal human interest should still remain to thousands of thinking men and women a sealed book. It is in the hope that these pages may prove of some service in enlarging the circle of those who find delight in the rich treasure-house of classical antiquity that I have ventured on their publication.

My thanks are due to two of my colleagues at University College, Reading—Professor Ure and Mr. F. M. Stenton—and to my wife, who have read the book in proof and offered much valuable criticism and advice. I am also indebted to Mr. Stenton for the maps of Roman Britain and of the Roman Empire in the Sixth Century A.D.

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THE ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE FIRST THREE CENTURIES A.D.

ROMAN BRITAIN

THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE BARBARIAN KINGDOM, ABOUT 520 A.D.

THE LEGACY OF GREECE AND ROME

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY. WHAT THE MODERN WORLD OWES TO ANTIQUITY

§ 1. Modern civilisation influenced by three peoples of antiquity—the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans.
§ 2. The Hebrews belong to the Semitic, the Greeks and Romans to the Indo-European family.
§ 3. Nature of the debt we owe (*a*) to the Hebrews;
§ 4. (*b*) to the Greeks;
§ 5. (*c*) to the Romans.
§ 6. These three civilisations were preceded by earlier civilisations, both in the Middle East and in the Eastern Mediterranean.

1. Of the peoples of the ancient world there are three who left behind them a history of special interest and value for after-time. These three peoples are the Hebrew, the Greek and the Roman. The creations of their genius, such as the Hebrew psalms, the sculpture, poetry and philosophy of the Greeks, the law and empire of the Romans, remain a heritage of lasting inspiration to mankind. They have borne a pre-eminent part in shaping the civilisation of modern Europe. When we speak of civilisation we mean the whole body of beliefs and customs, of religious, social and political institutions, of industry and commerce, arts and science, literature and philosophy, which determine the character of life in different races at

different periods of their history. Long before our Celtic, Germanic and Scandinavian forefathers had emerged from barbarism, these three races had attained to a high level of civilisation, so that they influenced profoundly the education of the less cultured peoples who have grown into the leading nations of to-day. When, for instance, the rude barbarians accepted Christianity they inherited therewith the influence of Jewish religious and moral beliefs, of Greek philosophy, of Roman organisation. We shall see later how this was so. In this opening chapter I propose to indicate briefly the special aspect of civilisation in which each of these peoples has most deeply influenced the modern world.

2. One of the three peoples, the Hebrews, belonged to the Semitic stock, which in prehistoric times had its home in Arabia. In the next chapter we shall meet with other nations, such as the Babylonians and the Assyrians, who were members of the same Semitic family. The Greeks and the Romans, on the contrary, belonged, in part at least to the Indo-European family, whose home was perhaps in the steppe lands north of the Caucasus, and who, in remote ages, parted into two great branches. One branch passed westwards into Europe, and from it sprang not only the Greeks and Romans, but also our Celtic, Germanic and Scandinavian ancestors. The other branch settled part on the tableland of Iran (Persia) and were the forefathers of the Medes and Persians of ancient history; another part passed the mountains into the valleys of the Indus and the Ganges and colonised Northern India. All these migrations took place in very remote ages; the historic peoples of antiquity were rarely, if ever, free from intermixture of different races.

3. **The Hebrews.**—The debt which modern civilisation owes to the Hebrews is almost wholly in the field of

religion. Their poetry, the surest guide to the thought and feeling of a people, is essentially religious poetry. Its value lies not so much in its literary form as in the deep spiritual insight and feeling to which it gives expression. The Hebrew race was but little distinguished in war or politics; save for a brief period of empire under King David, its secular achievements would pass almost unnoticed in world-history. It was the spiritual genius of prophets, such as Amos and Hosea in Israel in the eighth century B.C., and Isaiah in Judah in the seventh century, which first transformed an exclusive tribal faith into a religion of universal meaning for the world. Jehovah was revealed no longer as a jealous tribal God leading Israel to victory over equally real tribal gods of their enemies, but as the One Divine Ruler of the universe, who punished Israel through their enemies for their sins, who desired mercy and not sacrifice, and who claimed the worship not of personal gift but of righteous dealing between man and man. This transformation of Hebrew religion contributed, it is true, to break up the political unity of the Hebrew state. But the seed sown by the early prophets ripened during the bitter experience of national humiliation and captivity into a purified religion, which in due season gave birth to the faith that conquered the civilised world. The Hebrews first of historic peoples attained to a monotheistic religion, to the belief in One God, the Creator and Governor of the world. Christ, born of a Jewish mother and bred in the strict observance of the Jewish law, came not to destroy that law but to fulfil. The influence of Greece and Rome on the growth of Christianity, of which we shall speak later in this book, never obscured the traces of its Hebrew origin. We have only to think of the Puritans of the seventeenth century to realise how

deeply Christianity has been permeated by the Hebraic spirit.

4. **The Greeks.**—It is more difficult to indicate in a few words the work of the Greeks—or Hellenes, as they styled themselves—in history. They influenced modern religion not through their religion but through their philosophy. The Greek deities were fashioned in the likeness of men, with human passions and interests. Though stronger, more beautiful, more jealous and more amorous, though immortal and enjoying a richer life than mortals, in all essentials they felt and acted as Greek men and women felt and acted. We shall see that poets and philosophers strove in vain to spiritualise the popular faiths. Greek religion has afforded in all times a rich field for art and poetry, and its tales are still a delight to the imagination; but it could not satisfy the intellectual or the moral aspirations of a more reflective age. On the other hand, our debt to the Greeks embraces the whole domain of secular culture. In art and literature, in philosophy and science, the Greek genius achieved results which for their range and value are without comparison in the history of civilisation. "The period which intervened between the birth of Pericles and the death of Aristotle" (*i. e.* the fifth and fourth centuries B.C. in Greek history) "is undoubtedly, whether considered by itself or with reference to the effects which it produced upon the subsequent destinies of civilised man, the most memorable in the history of the world." So wrote the poet Shelley; and all thinkers and poets are witnesses to the truth of his words. Freedom and individuality are present everywhere in the life of the ancient Greeks. They were at once eager and courageous in intellectual inquiry and full of delight in life and action. What strikes us most is their wonderful energy. Their whole

history is a record of bold experiment in thought and practice. Their intellectual genius was the fountain head of philosophy and science; their practical genius found expression alike in political activity, in war and commerce, in literary and artistic creation. Almost every type of poetry and speculation was discovered by the Greeks and carried far on the path towards perfection. Their ideal of life was that of a gifted and harmonious individuality, controlled by inward principle and reason; of energy, not wild and ungoverned, but ruled by self-knowledge and clear judgment. No race has been so free from other-worldliness or has striven to embody the ideal of life so entirely in the actual conditions of human experience. Resisting every craving after the impossible, they set themselves resolutely to grasp the nature of man and the world as they really are, and, with a clear grasp of the truth of things, to use the world as a field for the realisation of their ideals of life. Freedom, individuality, delight and confidence in human powers, are first met with among the Greeks and make them the masters of "humane" culture for all time. The characteristic gifts of the race bore with them their curse. The individuality and freedom that made the Greeks supreme in art and science proved the ruin of Greek political independence. It is true, as we shall see later on, that Greek culture found its stimulus and its scope in the atmosphere of free discussion which prevailed in the Greek city-state, and that the Greek genius is manifested alike in their political theory and in their political practice. But there is another side to the picture. The political life of the Greek cities presents a dark scene of restless ambition, personal jealousy and party faction, aversion to federal solidarity, continual revolution and civil strife. It was this lack of national unity that left Greece so easy a prey to the armies, first

of the Macedonian kings, and afterwards of Rome. But the Greek spirit had its revenge; as under Alexander it mastered the culture of the East, so, later, it permeated the Roman conquerors and through Rome moulded the thought and culture of the modern world.

5. **The Romans.** — Rome was the Imperial state of antiquity, and the Roman people the great empire-builders of world-history. Their religion was strictly subordinate to the political authority. An instance may serve to bring this home. Cæsar, a frank sceptic, whose private life was certainly not above suspicion, staked all at a critical moment of his career on his election as supreme pontiff: it was merely a step towards political power. So the influence of Rome on Christianity is mainly in the field of ecclesiastical organisation. By nature the Roman had little appreciation either of art or science; in early days he regarded a poet as a vagabond and philosophy as a danger to morality. Far otherwise was it with the Greeks in Homer; for them the blind poet had been reft by the gods of sight, but in its stead had received the gift of godlike song. The impulse to poetry and art came to Rome from Greece; though, when once they had learnt their lesson, the Romans expressed their national spirit with no servile imitation in imperishable verse. Yet their poets knew and recognised that the true genius of the race lay elsewhere. "Others may mould in softer lines the breathing bronze—ay, and cause living features to start from the marble; they may plead their lawsuits better, and trace the motions of the heavens and the rising of the stars; be it thine, O son of Rome, to rule the nations: these shall be thy arts, to lay down the law of peace, to spare the vanquished, and to crush the haughty by the

sword"[1] Like all empire-builders whose work has stood the stress of time, the Romans had no wild thirst for conquest. They were a race not so much of warriors as of lawgivers and administrators. "To lay down the law of peace"—the *pax Romana*—to repress anarchy and disorder around their ever-expanding dominion was their peculiar mission. Children beside the Greeks in culture, with an element of inhumanity and lack of refinement in their nature, the Romans were strong precisely where the Greeks were weak, in racial solidarity, in political union, in subjection of individuality to the service of the state. To "do at Rome as Rome does" was the virtue of the Roman citizen. Greek history is the history of city-states and individuals: Roman history is the history of a race. Governed by no deliberate policy of conquest, but by the logic of hard fact, the fortune of the Roman people led them to incorporate in their empire the whole civilised world as it stood at the time of Christ's birth. To gather up in one vast organisation the peoples and civilisations of antiquity, to police the Mediterranean and ordain peace over a disordered world, to hand on to the barbarians of the North and West of Europe the culture of the past enriched by their own genius for law and government; these were the functions and the destiny of Rome. Thus "all roads lead to Rome." As the great military highways of the Romans radiated from Rome over the empire, so the currents of ancient and modern history alike find their meeting-point in Rome. The peoples of to-day owe more than half of their law, their language, and their institutions to the genius of Imperial Rome.

6. We have sketched in bare outline the service rendered to human progress by these three nations of the

[1] Virgil: *Aeneid*, VI. 847-853.

ancient world. Two points must here be noted. Their civilisations all alike belong to the first millennium before Christ (1000 B.C.–A.D. 1). Again, all alike are Mediterranean civilisations. Long before the Hebrews, Greeks and Romans began to play their part in history, the Mediterranean had been the centre of the world's trade. Throughout all ages commerce and civilisation are closely connected ; for commercial highways are links of intercourse between races and aid the distribution not merely of material products but of ideas and habits of life. The Mediterranean remained the centre of trade and civilisation until the discoveries of the great navigators at the close of the fifteenth century A.D. heralded the oceanic commerce and civilisation amid which we live to-day. The voyages of Diaz, da Gama and Columbus did more than open out new markets in the Indies and the New World for the peoples of modern Europe. They changed the centre of gravity of civilisation. With the rise of America, Japan and the British dominions beyond the seas there has been effected a revolution in the history of civilisation since the time when Rome's empire over the Mediterranean area laid the whole civilised world beneath her sway. But prior to the emergence of the great Mediterranean peoples of antiquity, whose life forms the main subject of this book, there existed earlier civilisations both in the Mediterranean area and on the banks of the great rivers of Africa and Asia. In particular, the record of the "fluvial" or "river" civilisations on the Nile and the Euphrates has been preserved on strange monuments that carry us back to remote ages of history, to the fourth and third millennia before Christ. We must speak briefly of these and of the early civilisations of the Eastern Mediterranean in the next chapter. Their influence on the modern world is indirect and subordinate when

compared with that of the later Mediterranean peoples. But they impressed their marks on the early life of Israel, Greece and Rome ; and they form the historical context amid which these three nations arose and played their part. We must cease to think of peoples as isolated atoms, whose story can be disconnected from the general course of the world's history ; and a wider glance over the early empires will help to illustrate the essential unity and continuity of ancient civilisation.

CHAPTER II

THE EARLY CIVILISATIONS OF THE EAST, TO THE CONQUESTS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

§§ 1–4. (*A*) **Egypt**: physical conditions (§ 1): Archaeological discoveries (§ 2): The Old Kingdom, Middle Kingdom, New Empire, Deltaic dynasties (§ 3); general character of civilisation (§ 4).

§§ 5–7. (*B*) **The Empire of the Middle East**:
Early Babylonian Empire (§ 5).
Assyria (§ 6).
Later Babylonian Empire (§ 7).

§§ 8–10. (*C*) **Syria, Canaan, the Hittites.**
The Hebrews (§ 8).
The Phoenicians (§ 9).
The Hittite Empire (§ 10).

§§ 11–14. (*D*) **Aegean Civilisations.**
Archaeological discoveries (§ 11).
Early Cretan civilisation (§ 12).
Later Aegean civilisation (§ 13).
Asia Minor; the Lydian kingdom (§ 14).

§§ 15–17. (*E*) **The Persian Empire.**
The Persian race (§ 15).
The Persian Empire (§ 16).
Decline and fall (§ 17).

§ 18. (*F*) **Conclusion.**
Slight influence of these nations on Greece and Western civilisation.

THE purpose of this chapter is to sketch in outline the early civilisations of antiquity preparatory to a more detailed study of Greece and Rome. Four of these civilisations, those of

(*A*) Egypt,
(*B*) The Euphrates-Tigris Valley,
(*C*) Syria and Canaan,
(*D*) The Aegean area and Asia Minor,

will be considered historically up to the establishment of (*E*) the Persian Empire, which embraced all of them in the

sixth century B.C. Finally, in Section *E*, we shall treat of the Persian Empire until it falls before Greek civilisation at its conquest by Alexander the Great (B.C. 330).

(*A*) Egypt

1. "Egypt," wrote the Greek historian Herodotus, who visited the land in the fifth century B.C., "is the gift of the Nile." Soil, products, vegetation, animals, are all alike determined by the great river which, long before man's advent, widened a limestone fracture into a gorge, filled the gorge with debris from the southern highlands, and encroaching upon the Mediterranean, formed the Delta. The country is a long narrow oasis between desert barriers to east and west. Its prosperity depends, now as seventy centuries ago, on one great natural phenomenon, the annual inundation of the Nile. From the constancy of these simple physical conditions results a constancy in the life and habits of the people. The fellaheen under Mehemet Ali in the nineteenth century of our era plied the same monotonous tasks of tilling the soil and forced labour as the nameless serfs who built the pyramids early in the third millennium B.C.[1] The

[1] There are wide differences of opinion among scholars in regard to early Egyptian chronology. In the case of the earliest dynasties these differences extend over 2000 years. Prof. Petrie dates the first historic dynasty in the middle of the sixth millennium B.C., the fourth dynasty (the Pyramid builders) in the first half of the fifth millennium, the twelfth dynasty in the second half of the fourth millennium. Others place the fourth dynasty early in the third millennium and the twelfth dynasty at its close. There is general agreement as to chronology from the time of the eighteenth dynasty (sixteenth to fourteenth centuries B.C.) onward. The popular prejudice in favour of big numbers is what Bacon called an "Idol of the Tribe"; where detailed discussion is impossible, and the question is still in dispute, it is better to rest content with the more modest estimate. Readers must not accept the chronology as fixed prior to the eighteenth dynasty. The same uncertainty obscures early Babylonian chronology. See the articles "Egypt" and "Babylonia" in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*—sections on Chronology.

irregularity in the Nile's overflow called forth human effort to resist the periodic danger of famine. Nowhere has human cunning combated so persistently with nature. The vast reservoir of Lake Moeris, constructed by the Theban Pharaohs of the twelfth dynasty (early second millennium B.C.) bears witness to the same aim and energy as the Assouan Dam completed the other day by British engineers under the direction of Lord Cromer.

2. Our knowledge of the early history of Egypt is due mainly to the invasion by Napoleon (1798). In 1799 a French officer discovered near Rosetta a stone, now in the British Museum, bearing an inscription in three characters, hieroglyphic, demotic or popular, and Greek. The proper names, which were the same in the Greek as in the hieroglyphics, gave after long study the key to the hieroglyphic writing on Egyptian monuments. The last century has witnessed the gradual unveiling of the shroud that hid the remote past. Imagination is dazzled as scholars have revealed cycle upon cycle of past history, stretching back at least into the fourth millennium B.C; a history not merely of the wars and conquests of kings, but of beliefs and customs, art and culture, comprising a series of rich civilisations hitherto unsuspected by mankind.

3. It is not our purpose to relate the story of the thirty-one historic dynasties from the first (in the fourth millennium *i. e.* 4000–3000 B.C.) to the conquest of Egypt by Alexander the Great (332 B.C.). We have only to note the chief epochs, the landmarks in the relations of Egypt to other empires, and the leading facts of its civilisation.

(*a*) The first eight dynasties, with their seat at Memphis, unified Upper and Lower Egypt under one rule, and extended their sovereignty westwards towards Libya and

eastwards in the Sinaitic peninsula. We can trace their civilisation in mines, temples, tombs and pyramids—the great pyramids of Giza were built in the fourth dynasty (2800–2600 B.C.)—the sculptures of the fourth dynasty show a high level of artistic workmanship; already under the sixth dynasty (2500–2300 B.C.) there existed a royal library at Memphis.

The Old Kingdom (Dyn. 1–8), fourth and third millennium B.C.

(*b*) During the third millennium the seat of government moved southwards, and from the eleventh dynasty (2100 B.C.) onwards Thebes in Upper Egypt became the capital for about one thousand years. The Pharaohs of the twelfth dynasty (1000–1800 B.C.) are pre-eminent as builders and conquerors. They quarried and mined in the desert as far as Mount Sinai; constructed Lake Moeris (see p. 12) and great temples; their sculpture rivals that of the fourth dynasty. At this epoch Egypt emerges from isolation; its civilisation, hitherto fluvial, enters into contact with that of Crete and the Eastern Mediterranean (see p. 23). There follows an obscure period (1800–1600 B.C.) during which alien Semitic tribes (the Hyksos or Shepherd-Kings), driven westwards from Asia, mastered Egypt for several centuries.

The Middle Kingdom (Dyn. 9–17), third and second millennium B.C.

(*c*) The overthrow of the Shepherd-Kings gave the impulse to the most brilliant epoch of expansion in Egyptian history. Under the eighteenth dynasty (1580–1320 B.C.) Egypt became a great military state; her kings conquered Syria and Phoenicia, fought the Hittites (pp. 21, 22) on the upper Euphrates, and ruled supreme from that river to the Libyan desert and the confines of Ethiopia. They organised their empire anew, and built tombs, obelisks and temples—that of the god Ammon at

The New Empire (Dyn. 18–20), second millennium B.C.

Karnak was the greatest temple of the ancient world. It was at this time that the children of Israel were sojourning in the land of Goshen, and the exodus to the Sinaitic desert took place under a Pharaoh of the nineteenth dynasty (*c.* 1320–1200). The close of the second millennium witnessed a decline of the Egyptian Empire; Syria and Canaan were lost, and Egypt suffered constant invasion by the sea peoples of the Aegean (p. 22).

(*d*) The dynasties of the first millennium had their centre in the Delta. Egypt became more and more a maritime power and dependent on the empires of the Middle East. In the tenth century Shishak I subdued Israel and Judah, after Solomon's death; but the revival of past glory was cut short by the rise of the Assyrian Empire (p. 17). In 672 Esarhaddon mastered Egypt, and the epoch of foreign domination opens. The decline of Assyria before Babylon in the last half of the seventh century gave Egypt one more chance of independence; the twenty-sixth dynasty (at Sais in the Delta, 610–525) saw a revival of art and a brilliant episode of commerce and empire. Egypt was closely allied with Lydia and the Asiatic Greeks: Necho conquered Canaan and fought the Babylonians on the Euphrates; his offering to the temple of Delphi of the cloak which he wore when he defeated King Josiah at Megiddo, on his march to fight Nebuchadrezzar, illustrates the historical contact of Greece, Egypt, Judah and Babylon. The invasion of Nebuchadrezzar was repelled; but when the Babylonian power fell before Persia the doom of Egypt was sealed. In 525 Cambyses conquered Egypt and the land remained subject to Persia, save for the sixty years from 405–345, till the Persian Empire fell before Alexander the Great (332–330).

Deltaic Dynasties (21–31), first millennium B.C.

4. The civilisation of Egypt was closely bound up with the national religion. The Pharaohs of the early dynasties unified the various local faiths in a single religious system; but the traces of the manifold origins always survived. The solitary attempt of a king at the close of the eighteenth dynasty to establish monotheism failed to secure a hold upon the people. The "Book of the Dead," which dates in part from the New Empire, illustrates the Egyptian beliefs about the soul and its destiny after death. The Pharaohs were supreme in religion, being regarded as divine; they governed through their vizirs and an elaborate body of state officials. The priesthood was independent and rich through possession of large temple estates; at the close of the second millennium the Theban high priest became for a time the real ruler of Egypt. We have spoken of the high excellence of Egyptian art, especially under the early dynasties: the Egyptians possessed some skill in practical geometry, astronomy and medicine, though their knowledge of these subjects was quite unscientific. But they achieved little or nothing in the domain of pure science or philosophy; and their literary documents are of slight merit. When under the twenty-sixth dynasty the Greeks became acquainted with Egypt, what impressed them naturally was its vast antiquity. "You Greeks are always children," so the Egyptian priest is said to have remarked to Solon; reverence for antiquity led the Greeks to idealise the intellectual achievements of a people whose history stretched back to so remote a past.

(*B*) The Empires of the Middle East

5. (*a*) The second great fluvial civilisation of antiquity was that of Babylonia. Records are preserved of a dynasty of Semitic conquerors from Arabia in the third

millennium, who unified Babylonia under their sway, and invaded Syria and Palestine. They constructed temples, roads and canals, knew the secrets of gem cutting, and work in bronze and copper, wrote inscriptions in cuneiform (arrow-headed) characters, observed the stars, composed grammars and dictionaries of the Semitic tongues, and formed a royal library.

i. Babylonia (I), third and second millennium B.C.

(*b*) Early in the second millennium we find another dynasty with its seat of government at Babylon, which henceforward becomes the Holy City of Western Asia. To this dynasty belongs the great King Khammurabi (the Amraphel of Gen. xiv. 1), who subdued the Elamites to the east, and the peoples who dwelt between the Euphrates and the Tigris to the north, and ruled to the coasts of the Mediterranean. His code of laws, a copy of which was discovered at Nineveh, evidences a very high development of civilisation. It remained in force well on into the Christian era, and influenced the legislation of the Mohammedan conquerors of the East. His letters bear witness to a high level of culture and a highly organised administrative system. Khammurabi and his successors gathered the various local religions into one system; from this time onwards Babylonian religion acquires a distinctively moral and spiritual value. It is interesting to discover in the old religious traditions of Babylonia the tales of the garden of Paradise, the deluge, the tower of Babel and the confusion of tongues. The Chaldeans of Babylonia were great observers of the heavens; the movements of the stars were thought to give the key to events on earth, and astronomy was closely associated with their religion. The Chaldean astronomers foretold eclipses, though their predictions were unsupported by any scientific theory of the heavens.

Unlike the Egyptians, whose culture was artistic, the Babylonians developed a culture that was essentially literary in character. They were the great civilisers of Western Asia; their language and measures of weight prevailed over the East; they constructed sundials and levers; their women enjoyed a legalised position of dignity; and a man could ride in safety throughout the land under the protection of the laws of Khammurabi.

6. (*c*) As the second millennium wore on the Babylonian kingdom grew weak; and to the north a new race rose to greatness on the banks of the river Tigris round Nineveh. This people, the children of Asshur, or Assyrians, at first subject to Babylon, became its conquerors about 1300 B.C.

ii. Assyria, second and first millennium B.C.

The Babylonians were a nation of agriculturists and traders; the priests controlled their princes and often effected dynastic revolutions. The Assyrians, on the contrary, were from first to last a warrior race; their kings were generals who commanded a military nobility; ferocious and cruel beyond all other Eastern peoples, their history is a record of war and conquest. Such culture as they acquired was borrowed from Babylonia: their sole advance was to build in stone instead of brick. The huge winged bulls and the inscribed slabs that adorn the British Museum record a continuous tale of savage warfare. "I filled with their corpses the ravines and summits of the mountains," wrote one of the earlier Assyrian princes of his enemies, "I cut off their heads and crowned with them the walls of their cities; I brought away slaves, booty, treasure, innumerable." The Assyrians were fanatically devout; and all their victories were in the name and to the glory of their God Asshur; but the priesthood had little influence in their

councils. Their princes were the first to replace annual conscription by a standing army; and their military triumphs were largely due to the introduction of cavalry instead of chariots. That they possessed capacity for organising their empire is evidenced by their elaborate hierarchy of officials and the imposition of fixed annual tribute from their provinces. Their power was greatest in two periods of their history—(i) in the twelfth century B.C., when they subdued the Hittites in the north-west, who had already been weakened by the Egyptian conquerors of the eighteenth dynasty, and mastered Syria; (ii) in the eighth and seventh centuries, when the house of Sargon, to which Sennacherib and Esarhaddon belonged, ruled over Babylon, Syria and Palestine, the highlands of Media, the Greeks of Cyprus, and Egypt. The Assyrian conquest of Israel and invasion of Judah is familiar from the historical and prophetic books of the Old Testament.

iii. Babylonia (II), and iv. Media, first millennium B.C.

7. (*d*) At the close of the seventh century Assyria in turn fell before the united forces of the Medes from the plateau of the north-east and the Babylonians, who had regained independence under Nabopolassar (625). With her empire vanished her influence on history: her records were soon buried beneath the sand,

> "Her glory mouldered and did cease
> From immemorial Nineveh,"[1]

till in the nineteenth century of our era Layard and his successors unearthed the huge stone monuments that bore the story of her ferocity in war and conquest. The victors portioned her empire between them, with the exception of Egypt, which secured its independence.

[1] Rosetti: *The Burden of Nineveh.*

Both the new empires were short-lived. That of the Medes, an Indo-European people, was created by Cyaxares and decayed after the founder's death. That of Babylon reached its climax under Nebuchadrezzar II (605–562), who conquered Syria and Canaan, and made his capital Babylon one of the marvels of the world. Ere long his dynasty illustrated the fate that sooner or later befell every Oriental empire. Hardy warriors descend from the highlands upon the fertile plains, and when luxury has sapped the strength of their princes, give way in turn before a new race of conquerors. So now the Persians, a tribe akin and subject to the Medes, dwelling in the hills to the east of the Persian gulf, rose against their lords under their warrior chieftain Kourush (Cyrus). Media fell before them in 549, and thirteen years later Babylon (536). The epoch of Persian empire had begun.

(*C*) Syria, Canaan, the Hittites

8. (*a*) The religious genius of the Hebrew race has won for them a place in history to which they are in no way entitled by political achievements. We have seen (p. 14) that the Israelites quitted Egypt under the nineteenth dynasty; after long wandering in the desert of Sinai they settled near Kadesh in the south of Canaan, whence they slowly made headway against the inhabitants of the land. Their conquests were accompanied by fusion with the subjugated peoples and adoption of their language and culture. At the close of the second millennium the struggle with the Philistines, a non-Semitic people, probably immigrants from Crete (p. 23), led to the establishment of kingship under Saul, and the brief expansion of empire under David. David subdued the kindred Semitic tribes of Moab, Edom and

The Hebrews.

Ammon as well as the Syrian kingdoms that parted Canaan from the empires of the Euphrates valley. Under the monarchy the Hebrew race began to absorb Oriental and Egyptian culture, as it had earlier that of Canaan. Commerce, hitherto in the hands of Canaanites, developed under King Solomon; towns arose, and the old simplicity of manners died away. When the armies of Assyria threatened the divided kingdoms of Israel and Judah, prophets arose who heralded amid much popular opposition a purer and more spiritual reformation in religion (p. 3). In 721 Samaria fell before Sargon and the kingdom of Israel ceased to be. In 586 the kingdom of Judah, which relied in vain on Pharaoh Hophra of Egypt, was finally crushed by Nebuchadrezzar of Babylonia. Many of the inhabitants were carried captive to Babylon, till on the advent of the Persian empire Cyrus suffered them to return (538). With a purified religion and a remodelled law, established under Ezra and Nehemiah in the fifth century, Israel, though subordinate among the nations, entered upon its spiritual mission to mankind.

9. (*b*) On the seaboard of Northern Canaan lay the great commercial cities of the Phoenicians, a Semitic race.

The Phoenicians.

They may have been akin to the Egyptians and have migrated in early times from the shores of the Red Sea. Their life lay wholly in maritime trade. They possessed but little territory on land, but they planted forts and stations along the inland highways and round the coast of the Mediterranean. Again and again they submitted to foreign overlordship, content so long as they were left their freedom to trade. As we read of one of the cities of Israel: "They dwelt careless, after the manner of the Zidonians, quiet and secure."[1] In

[1] Judges xviii. 7.

the second millennium B.C. Sidon was the chief Phoenician city; when the Philistines captured Sidon in the twelfth century Tyre took her place. We read in the Bible of the alliance between David and Solomon and the Tyrian king Hiram. The Phoenician fleets scoured the Mediterranean in the period from 1200 to 800 B.C., founding colonies as far west as Sicily, Spain and Africa, of which the most famous by far was Carthage. They passed beyond the pillars of Melkarth (Straits of Gibraltar) into the open Atlantic, settled Tarshish (near Cadiz), navigated the coast of Morocco, and penetrated north to the British Isles. We read of Phoenician sailors who in the service of Pharaoh Necho (twenty-sixth dynasty, 610–594) circumnavigated Africa. The eighth century saw the recovery of Sidon; but the period of Phoenician sea-power was passing away, her colonies became independent, and the Phoenicians were content to furnish the navy of their Persian overlords. They were the great middlemen of the ancient world. With all their skill in mining and metal-work, and their enterprise upon the sea, they originated nothing of serious value to civilisation; their task was to diffuse the culture of other races over the Mediterranean world.

10. (*c*) A third people claim mention among the many buffer races that parted the great empires of the Nile and the Euphrates. We have seen that both the Egyptians and the Assyrians fought on the upper Euphrates against the Hittites. In the second millennium B.C. they appear as a powerful military people in the east of Asia Minor and the north of Syria. About the sixteenth century B.C. the centre of their dominion was the tableland of Cappadocia, where many records of their empire have been discovered; they probably

The Hittites.

subjugated the other states of Asia Minor (Phrygia and Lydia) to the west. They treated on equal terms both with Egypt and Assyria, remained the strongest power in north Syria well on into the first millennium, became wealthy in commerce owing to their command of overland highways between east and west, founded a great city at Carchemish on the upper Euphrates, and finally, enervated by prosperity, fell before the armies of Assyria (eighth century). They received a final blow from Croesus of Lydia, shortly before the rise of the Persian Empire.

(*D*) Early Aegean Civilisations

11. We have carried our survey of Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria, Canaan and Syria, to the latter half of the sixth century B.C., when they were absorbed in the mighty empire of Persia. Before we pass to Persia we must speak of another and a maritime series of civilisations which arose in Crete and the islands and shores of the Aegean Sea. We have already alluded (p. 14) to the inroads made by sea rovers into Egypt in the time of the nineteenth and twentieth dynasties. Who were these sea-peoples, who bear on Egyptian monuments names (Dard-n-y, Agavaśa) akin to the Dardanians (= Trojans) and Achaeans of Homer? There is a special interest in these early Aegean races, over and above that of the wonderful discoveries unearthed by archaeologists in recent years, in that they were the forerunners of the Greeks. Forty years ago little or nothing was known for certain of their life and history. The pioneer of Aegean archaeology was Heinrich Schliemann. As an errand boy in a tradesman's shop in Germany his imagination was stirred by the stories in the poems of Homer; he taught

himself Greek, won success in business, amassed wealth, all with the single aim of verifying by researches on the site of the Homeric Troy the truth of the narrative in the *Iliad*. At Hissarlik in the Troad (north-west of Asia Minor), the site of Troy, at Mycenae and Tiryns in the Peloponnesus (= Morea), he unearthed traces of a great civilisation dating from the second millennium B.C. Scholars of all nations followed in his steps, and every year is adding to the rich stores of knowledge thus revealed about the early life and culture of the Aegean area. We can only outline here some of the chief results that have been disclosed.

12. (*a*) "Aegean" civilisation embraces the islands and shores of the Aegean Sea, Crete, Cyprus, Western Asia Minor, the Greek peninsula, and the Ionian Islands to the west, with later offshoots in Sicily and the Western Mediterranean, as also in Syria and Egypt. The race that inhabited this area in remote times was not Asiatic, but Mediterranean, and belonged probably to the dark, long-haired stock that had its home in Northern Africa. The culture which arose was quite distinct in character from that of Egypt or the Asiatic races. It developed first in Crete in the third millennium B.C. There was the centre of a great maritime empire, and a civilisation equal to those of Egypt or Babylonia. Crete was the natural link between Europe and Africa, and commercial intercourse prevailed with Egypt in the time of the twelfth dynasty. Recent excavations have brought to light at Cnossus and elsewhere in Crete splendid royal palaces, with sculptured reliefs and paintings, metal work, engraved gems, and pottery that are evidence of a rich and refined civilisation. The drainage and sanitary arrangements of the palace at Cnossus are worthy of the twentieth century A.D. When a

(i) Crete, third and second millennium, B.C.

French scholar was shown the costumes of the women in the wall paintings, he exclaimed, "Mais ce sont des Parisiennes!" The Greek legends of the Cretan King Minos have been shown to rest on historic reality: even the Labyrinth wrought by Daedalus for Minos has been discovered. The Cretans were the first of European peoples to use writing; inscriptions, both in hieroglyphic and linear characters, have been discovered in the island. The sea-power of Crete declined as the second millennium ran its course; but it had diffused its culture over the Aegean world.

13. (*b*) By the middle of the second millennium a uniform civilisation prevailed, not merely in the Aegean area, but beyond its limits, westwards in Sicily, Sardinia and on the coast of Italy and Spain, eastwards in Syria and Palestine. To this epoch of Aegean culture belong the rich discoveries at Tiryns and Mycenae; it is possible that Mycenae inherited the sea-power over the Aegean as Crete declined from her greatness. Allied with the Hittites the sea peoples of this age attacked Egypt; their invasion may have given the occasion for the exodus of the Israelites. Later, their enterprise was turned westwards; the Tyrsenians and Shardanes from the Asiatic coast, whose names occur on Egyptian monuments of the twentieth dynasty, colonised Etruria and Sardinia. About 1400 B.C. this "Mycenaean" civilisation declined owing to the descent of less-civilised conquerors from the north of the Balkan peninsula. These invaders were in all probability the ancestors of the Greeks, who gradually fused with the older Aegean race and thus formed the Greeks of history. The memory of the rich culture of the middle of the second millennium is preserved for ever in the poems of Homer (p 38).

(ii) Aegean Civilisation in the second millennium B.C.

14. (*c*) As we shall see in a later chapter, the Aegean

shores of Asia Minor were Greek from very early times. When rich commercial cities arose in the eighth and seventh centuries, B.C. (p. 36), they were a natural object of envy to the princes of the interior. Asia Minor is a tableland from which valleys descend to the west coast, isolated by mountain ridges. The relief of the land has determined its history. The maritime cities, cut off one from the other by mountains, were an easy prey to conquerors from the inland plateau. In the second millennium the Hittites had extended their power to the coasts of the Aegean. In the eighth century the roving Cimmerians from the steppes north of the Caucasus swept down from the tableland and devastated the Greek cities by the sea. They ruined the ancient monarchy of Phrygia and dealt a rude blow to the younger power of Lydia. Lydia was at this time (eighth to sixth century B.C.) the buffer state between the Greeks and the great empires of the east. Early in the seventh century a native Lydian dynasty arose, whose princes assimilated Greek culture and in return gave the Greeks the one original invention of the Lydians—stamped coinage, which replaced the unstamped weighed metal of the Babylonians and other races. About 560 B.C. Croesus became king of Lydia. While he subjugated the Greeks on the Aegean coasts of Asia, he ruled them with mild subjection and was an ardent patron of Greek religion and culture. When Cyrus the Persian had conquered Media (549), Croesus, without waiting for the support of Egypt and other allies, attacked Cyrus, and his defeat cost him his kingdom (546). The fall of Lydia carried with it the submission of the Asiatic Greeks. The empire of Persia stretched from the Hindu-Kush to the Aegean.

(iii) Lydia.

(*E*) The Persian Empire

The Persian Race.

15. The Persians, like the Medes, and unlike the Babylonians and Assyrians, belonged to the Indo-European stock. Some time in the second millennium B.C. they moved westwards from eastern Iran to the highlands that rise to the east of the Persian Gulf. They brought with them the horse, the product of their ancestral home in the steppeland, used, as we have seen, by the Assyrians in warfare, but unknown in the earlier days when Khammurabi reigned in Babylon. The religion common to the Medes and Persians was a development of the same primitive faith that is embodied in the Sacred Books of India. But whereas the religion of the Indian branch subordinated all other divinities to a single supreme God, that of the Iranian branch was dualistic. Two supreme powers, of Good and Evil respectively, contended in supernatural conflict, and their strife determined the course of the world's history. Iranian religion was much more practical than the Indian; its goal was no mystic absorption in the Divine, but practical duty; it was free from antagonism to the world and human life. Such, at least, was the teaching of the prophet Zoroaster, to whom was ascribed the body of doctrine preserved and interpreted by the school of priests called Magi. It was the belief of the select few rather than of the many; its value, in contrast with other Oriental faiths, lies in its insistence on moral duty and individual responsibility. The Persians were hardy mountain peasants, humane in war and in their treatment of the vanquished, winning victories by their skill in archery, ready to tolerate and even to adopt foreign customs and ideas.

16. The drama of the Persian Empire ran the course

that has become familiar in Oriental history. Conquest, organisation, stationary maintenance of power, decadence and fall follow in natural sequence. Cyrus, the founder, represents the period of conquest. **The Persian Empire.** At his death (529) his empire stretched from the Aegean in the west to the Hindu-Kush in the east, from the Caspian in the north to the desert of Arabia in the south. His son Cambyses added Egypt (525) and the Greek colony of Cyrene. The second epoch, of organisation, is represented by Darius, son of Hystaspes (521–486). Darius is the type for all time of the great Oriental administrator. His vast empire, a medley of all peoples, nations and languages, with no unity of race, religion or common interest, was divided into twenty satrapies or vice-royalties. To guard against the ever-present danger of revolt, the civil and military power in each satrapy was entrusted to different hands; and a high official at the capital, Susa, called by the title of "The King's Eye," had for his special function the supervision of the provincial satraps. A magnificent system of roads and posts aided to centralise control. As was the general practice of Oriental despots, subject peoples preserved their local religions, customs and institutions; cities enjoyed municipal independence; the two signs of dependence were the fixed annual tribute and service in the field. The Persian aristocracy lived in close relations with the court; Persians were settled through the provinces and formed, together with representatives of the local peoples, the council of the satrap. The satrap was thus controlled at once by his council, by the general of the army, and by the central government. The administrative system thus established by Darius became the type for succeeding Oriental monarchies. He built great works, added the Punjab and Arabia to the empire, crossed the Hellespont

and received the homage of Thrace and Macedonia, and sought the favour of his subjects by lavish honours paid to their religions and oracles. Thus the oracle at Delphi favoured at the outset the Persian invasion of Greece. At the close of his long reign he was planning a great expedition against Greece. But the story of the Greek conflict with Persia belongs to a later chapter of this book.

17. The successors of Darius (486–338) were chiefly concerned to maintain the empire which he had organised.

The Fall of Persia.

Enervation in the ruling house, constant revolts in outlying provinces, especially Egypt, the long struggle with Greece, combined to foster the degeneration of the dynasty. On the death of the last capable ruler, Artaxerxes III (Ochus), in 338, there followed an interval of anarchy, which favoured the invasion from Greece. Philip of Macedon had planned a war of revenge for the Persian attack on Greece in the fifth century, and in 334 his son Alexander crossed the Hellespont and entered Asia Minor. Three years later (331) he won his crowning victory at Gaugamela, and on the death of the last Persian sovereign, the year after (330), his title and empire passed to Alexander. Henceforward the history of the Middle East becomes part of that of the Greek race.

18. (*F*) Conclusion

A study of the nations whose history we have outlined in this chapter brings to light the fact that, with one exception, Western civilisation owes little or nothing directly to these races. The exception is, of course, religion. Here the debt to Israel is untold; and the early religion of the Babylonians acquires a special

interest through its affinity with that of the early Hebrews. But the religion of Israel did not influence the West until Greece and Rome had completed the structure of their civilisation; and its influence even then was conditioned by fusion with the products of Greek and Roman culture. The same is true of the influence of Persian religious ideas upon Western civilisation. The art, the philosophy, the political institutions of Greece and Rome were original creations. The sculpture of the classic age in Greece (fifth and fourth centuries B.C.) owed practically nothing either to Egypt or to the early Aegean art of the second millennium. The city-states of Greece and Rome, of which we shall speak in succeeding chapters, had no parallel or anticipation elsewhere among Mediterranean or Oriental peoples. When the Greeks began to think scientifically in the sixth century B.C., their philosophers drew material for speculation from the crude observations amassed in Egypt and Babylonia, material which served as a stimulus to scientific inquiry. But they added fresh material of their own; and—which is the vital difference—the scientific spirit was purely their own. They might borrow the instruments of commerce and material welfare, weights and measures from Babylon or a stamped coinage from Lydia; but in the higher activities of the mind they drew upon their own genius and upon that alone. That genius arose, as if by magic, amid an alien world, as the goddess Athene in the legend sprang armed from the head of Zeus; and the history of the surrounding peoples serves merely to furnish the frame-work for its development and its expression.

CHAPTER III

Greek Civilisation: (I) Origins and Development

(*A*) **Historical and Political Development.**

§ 1. The making of the Greek people: migrations at the close of the second millennium.

§ 2. Greek history (*a*) not confined to continental Greece, and (*b*) not the history of a single state.

§ 3. The Greek city-state and its influence on Greek civilisation.

§ 4. Geographical conditions help to account for these features.

§ 5. Commercial expansion in the eighth to sixth centuries.

§ 6. Its effects—political unrest, plutocracy, tyranny: the Greek colonies.

(*B*) **Literature.**

§ 7. The Homeric epics: their relation to earlier Aegean culture.

§ 8. Lyric and elegiac poetry of the eighth to sixth centuries.

§ 9. "Gnomic" poetry: development of moral reflexion.

§ 10. Relation of Greek poetry to morals and religion.

(*C*) **The Birth of Philosophy.**

§ 11. Intellectual unrest in the age of expansion.

§ 12. Early scientific speculation.

§ 13. Application to the field of politics and morals.

§ 14. The religious revival.

(*D*) **Conclusion.**

§ 15. Ordered evolution of Greek culture.

I. (*A*) **Historical and Political Development.**—1. The origins of the Greek people are hard to trace. The historical Greeks of the first millennium were a mixed race, the product of fusion between Greek conquerors from the north-west of the Balkan peninsula and the older Aegean peoples of whom we spoke in the last chapter. Tribes akin to the Greek invaders settled in Macedonia, where they preserved their early customs and institutions up to the time of Alexander. Other kindred

branches crossed the Hellespont and occupied the west of Asia Minor. The processes of conquest and fusion were spread over several centuries in the latter half of the second millennium. What we know about them suggests problems rather than conclusions. For example, we cannot say with certainty whether the Greek language was introduced by the Greek invaders, or whether it was the product of their fusion with the older race. We can detect in the tales of Greek religion, which tell of conflict between older and younger gods, the traces of struggle and ultimate union. Further, the Greek invasion and conquest led to the migration of colonists to the islands and Asiatic shores of the Aegean; one of the groups of settlers bore with them from their home in Thessaly sagas which were fashioned into great epics by a succession of poets in the north-west of Asia Minor. These maritime migrations may be dated about 1300–1000 B.C. and are possibly connected with the stirrings of the sea rovers who troubled Egypt under the twentieth dynasty. Finally, at the close of the second millennium a fresh tribe of Greeks from the north—the Dorians, a hard and warlike stock, renowned for strength of character rather than for culture—pressed southward and gradually mastered the greater part of the Peleponnesus (Morea). These invaders were the forefathers of the Spartans of later history. Dorian emigrants also crossed the Aegean, settling in Crete and Rhodes and on the south-west coasts of Asia Minor. It is difficult to assign dates to these movements: they close about 900 B.C., when the Greek race had established itself over the Aegean area.

2. Thus from the dawn of its history Hellenic civilisation extends beyond the limits of continental Greece. We shall see presently how it spread in the eighth and seventh centuries round the Euxine (the Black Sea),

Northern Africa, and Southern Italy and Sicily. Southern Italy was known as "Great Hellas." Wherever in the Mediterranean we find Greek cities and Greek speech, there for purposes of ancient history was Greece. The early centuries of the first millennium—the period between the Dorian invasion and the consequent emigrations eastwards on the one hand, and the commercial expansion of the eighth and seventh centuries on the other—are veiled in obscurity. When the veil is partially drawn in the eighth century we find the Greeks grouped in city-states. The monarchies of which we read in the Homeric poems have given way to hereditary aristocracies. In the more advanced centres laws and constitutions are beginning to appear. It is essential to realise that the Greeks were never united in a single state. Their national bond was one of race and language, not of political union. Greek history is in fact the record of hundreds of independent city-states scattered over the islands and shores of the Mediterranean, each with a small tract of dependent territory. If ever one of these cities, such as Athens or Sicilian Syracuse, acquired a temporary overlordship over others, the empire was short-lived and the loss of liberty deeply resented by the subject states. Like the Italian republics of the later Middle Age, the Greek cities were passionately jealous of their independence; public life was marked by restless agitation, and patriotism was civic rather than national. Not that the Greeks were insensible to their Hellenic kinship; but the bond was one of common feeling, speech and culture. It found expression in the periodic athletic festivals, held under religious auspices and open to all Hellenes and to them alone. Amid a multitude of local worships the religion of the race developed certain universal features; the chief Olympian deities, such as

Zeus, Athene, Apollo, were reverenced throughout the Hellenic world, and in course of time the oracle of Apollo at Delphi won general recognition. The poetry and the knowledge that arose in various centres of culture permeated the Hellenic world; with a proud but just contempt the Greek drew a sharp line between Hellene and barbarian. But it was not till late in the fourth century that Hellas was politically united under Macedon; even then the Greeks of Italy and Sicily retained their independence, and the Macedonian lordship was won and held by force.

3. The city-state, or *polis*, was the peculiar creation of the Hellenic and Italian peoples, and its significance for Greek civilisation is incalculable. It affords a striking contrast, on the one hand, to the early empires of the East, on the other hand to the states of the modern world. The modern state is the fatherland, not the capital town; the capital may be changed—as in Russia, from Moscow to St. Petersburg—and the state yet remains the same. In Greece, and in Rome under the republic, the capital city was the state. It has been remarked by a living historian[1] that, in contrast to Oriental states, the city-state of Greece first secured the union of civilisation with political freedom. Political freedom in the East is found only among rude tribes living in small communities; military strength and advance in civilisation are attained only by the formation of large groups under despotic government, so that they purchase national greatness at the cost of liberty. He quotes in illustration the striking passage in the First Book of Samuel,[2] when the Israelites, thirsting for military glory, placed themselves voluntarily under an absolute

[1] Bevan: *House of Seleucus*, Vol. I, introductory chapter.
[2] 1 Sam. viii.

king. "And they said, Nay; but we will have a king over us; that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." The Greeks were the first historic people to solve the problem of the union of culture and freedom, and they solved it through the city-state. The free public life and rich individuality of the Hellenic city-states presents a dramatic contrast to the monotonous record of despotism, caste-privilege, and servitude in the history of the East. We know but little of the process by which the solution was achieved. Village communities may have come together for self-defence, or have united round a common centre of religious worship.[1] But its results on Greek civilisation are manifest. We have only to read Plato's *Republic* to realise how closely the constitution of the city-state is bound up with the moral and intellectual ideals of the Greeks. For Greek thinkers and statesmen alike the *polis* was the supreme condition for the realisation of the good life among the citizens. It furnished not merely a field for the highest practical activities, but the motive to free thought and intellectual progress. Both in the formal assemblies of the people and in the daily intercourse of the market place and the dinner-table, the life of the city-state gave a stimulus and an atmosphere for free discussion. The Greeks were a nation of talkers, and their talk was often childish and insincere, so that it roused contempt in the breast of the Roman, who was wont to act in silence. What distinguishes the Greeks above other nations who have loved talking is that they talked also about what was best worth discussion—law and freedom, the end of government, the causes of things, art and

[1] See Warde Fowler: *The City-State of the Greeks and Romans*, chs. 1, 2.

nature, virtue and the good for man. Above all, their talk, at its best, was reasoned and logical, the expression of clear thinking and a grasp of facts; so that their discussions issued in the birth of science and philosophy. No people has ever thought so deeply or talked so well on these high subjects as the Greeks. And their pre-eminence is due primarily to the intercourse of mind with mind rendered possible by their common life as citizens of the city-state.

4. Both of the facts noted in the preceding paragraphs, the expansion of Greece over the Mediterranean and the civic independence of the Greek city-state, were largely the product of geographical conditions. The cities of the Aegean area were situated either on islands or in valleys parted by high mountain ridges, and were thus protected from aggression on land. But they were not shut off from mutual intercourse; else, like the Swiss of modern history, they would have secured their independence at the cost of culture. The bond of union was the sea. The Gulf of Corinth and the numberless bays and inlets secured for the European Greeks a great length of coast-line; there was hardly any Greek state that had not easy access to the sea. The Greeks were a maritime race from early days; intercourse in trade both among themselves and with other peoples combined with the freedom and individuality of their cities to promote a rich and varied culture. Rarely has any race been so lavishly endowed by nature with the physical conditions of civilisation. Mountains and sea, a temperate and bracing climate, a soil that called forth and rewarded energy and skill, fostered the qualities of love of adventure and free action that the race brought with them when they descended as conquerors into the Greek peninsula.

5. The eighth century was marked by commercial

enterprise, great activity in colonisation, the growth of wealth and social refinement, and widespread political unrest. By 600 B.C. the Greeks had planted colonies, commercial centres, on the shores of the Sea of Marmora and the Black Sea, in North Africa, all round the south coasts of Italy, and over the whole Sicilian coastline, save where the Carthaginian strongholds commanded the extreme west of the island. Early in the sixth century Greek traders secured from the friendly princes of the twenty-sixth dynasty a permanent foothold at Naucratis in the Egyptian Delta. Of the commercial significance of this expansion we cannot speak in detail here. The trade of the Mediterranean from Sicily to the Levant had passed from the Phoenicians to the Greeks. In the extreme west Carthage enjoyed an unchallenged monopoly. But elsewhere the Greek trader and colonist, with a natural genius for making himself at home amid new conditions and alien peoples, ousted the earlier races from the markets of the Mediterranean.

6. Commercial expansion carried with it far-reaching effects on culture, on thought, and on social and political life. We shall speak of the effects on literature and philosophy in later sections of this chapter. Splendid cities arose, such as Miletus in Ionia, Syracuse in Sicily, and Sybaris in southern Italy; a "Sybarite" is to this day a term for the lover of luxurious ease. A new social class of merchant princes arose, who were liberal patrons of art and poetry. In the field of politics there was constant ferment and revolution. The plutocracy struggled for power and privilege against the monopoly of the old nobility. We can trace how the rivalry of birth and wealth, of land and trade, prepared the way now for democracy, now for despotism. "Tyrannies" first arose in this age, and though short-lived in any

single city are henceforward a standing feature in the commercial centres of Greece. Often, as in the days of the Italian renaissance, a rich merchant would overthrow with popular aid the oppressive nobles and establish himself as despot. The "tyrants" were frequently enlightened and humane rulers, *e. g.* Peisistratus at Athens in the sixth century, but they were a deep offence to the Greek love of freedom, and their rule excited bitter resentment. They set themselves above the law and thereby renounced all claim to its protection. Their rule was a violation of the spirit of the Hellenic city-state. Moreover, the Greeks shared to the full the dislike felt in all ages by free people towards power based on possession of wealth. The poet Simonides celebrates the praise of the murderers of Peisistratus' son in these words: "A great light broke upon the Athenians when Harmodius and Aristogeiton slew Hipparchus."

The keen party struggles that marked the age were in turn a stimulus to fresh colonisation. Not infrequently, and often under the guidance of the Delphic oracle, which rises to importance in this epoch, the malcontents in a city were despatched as a colony to some unoccupied region favourable to trade, where they became an independent government. The Greek "colony" was politically independent of the mother-city; such bond as existed was one of religion and sentiment or of commercial alliance, though we read of colonies that were keen commercial rivals of the parent-state (*e. g.* Corinth and her colony Corcyra). The period of colonisation extends through the eighth and seventh centuries into the sixth. Enough has been said to show that the epoch was one of rapid social and political transition. The issues in the public life of Greece are seen in the growth of party rivalry, henceforward a dominant fact in the

life of the Hellenic city-state, in the development of law and political institutions, and in the advance towards democracy through the breaking down of hereditary privilege. Of still greater moment was the expansion of culture in the domains of poetry, art and thought. It is to these aspects of development that we now turn.

(*B*) **Literature.** 7. The literature of every nation opens with song; and the earliest Greek poems that we possess are two epics ascribed to Homer—the Iliad and the Odyssey. The Iliad tells the story of battles "on the ringing plains of windy Troy," of the prowess of Achilles and his slaying of Trojan Hector. The Odyssey narrates the ten years' wandering of Odysseus over sea and land after Troy had fallen, his return to his faithful wife Penelope, and his slaughter of the suitors who had ravaged his home. They are the two survivals of many early epics, and represent the ripe fruit of a long period of poetic creation. The first Greek settlers in Asia Minor brought with them their ballads, written in hexameter verse—"The stateliest measure ever moulded by the lips of man"[1]—which were wrought into great epics by a school of poets between 1200 and 800 B.C. We can trace in later passages of the Iliad and the Odyssey changes of thought and custom, and the growth of moral ideas; the Odyssey, which on the whole is later than the Iliad, reflects the romantic spirit of the age of maritime adventure. No

[1] Tennyson: "To Virgil." The verse of ancient races is unrhymed. Dante was the first great world poet to use rhyme. The ancient metres differed from modern imitations in that they rest on the quantity of the syllables, not on stress. Hence such modern hexameters as these from Clough—

So in the | golden | morning they | parted and | went to the | westward,
"There hath he | farmstead and | land, and | fields of | corn and | flaxfields,"

give an inadequate impression of the metre as used by the ancients.

extant literature opens so gloriously as that of Greece with these two epics. Their significance in Greek civilisation is threefold. First, because of their beauty and splendour they have proved an inspiration for all time. Aeschylus is said to have called his tragedies "fragments from the great banquet of Homer;" poets of all ages might echo his words. The parting of Hector and Andromache, Helen's thought of her dead brothers as she stands upon the wall of Troy, the supplication of the aged Priam before Achilles for Hector's corpse, when the aged King "dared what none other man on earth has dared before, to stretch forth my hand toward the face of the slayer of my sons," stir a like emotion in readers of every nation and language, in the unlettered peasant as in the scholar or the poet. From the dawn of Greek poetry its theme is what is most universal in human life and feeling. Secondly, as time went on, the Homeric poems came to be read and taught as a storehouse of moral and religious truth. Lines such as the word of Achilles to the envoys, "Blacker than the gates of hell is he who speaketh one thing with his lips but hideth another in his heart," or Odysseus' "Endure, my heart: far worse things hast thou endured," served as texts which Greek children learnt much as those of modern England learn verses from the Scriptures. The Homeric poems did much to shape the religious ideas and moral customs of succeeding generations. Thirdly, the poems depict with substantial fidelity the life of the chieftains and warriors of the Aegean world in the second millennium. The poets, it is true, are singing of a past age; and the picture is in part coloured by an infusion of later custom. But when we read the description of the shield of Achilles (in the eighteenth book of the Iliad), of the political institution of king, council, and assembly of the folk (in

the second book), of the palaces, the armour and the dress, we find striking confirmation of their accuracy in recent discoveries of Schliemann and his successors.

8. The early epics were tales of heroic action, of the deeds of famous men. Later poets stuck a more subjective note and in a more romantic spirit voiced their personal passion in lyric verse. The age of commercial expansion (seventh to fifth centuries) saw the birth of lyric and elegiac poetry, richly varied in subject and metrical form, comprising poems of love and war, sorrow and ennui, the dirge and the marriage-song, choric odes, and political and personal satire. "Age cannot wither" the imperishable beauty of these poems. They defy translation, but an echo of their charm may be caught in Rossetti's adaptation from Sappho—

1.

"Like the sweet apple that reddens upon the topmost bough,
A-top on the topmost twig,—which the pluckers forgot somehow,—
Forget it not, nay, but get it not, for none could get it till now."

2.

"Like the wild hyacinth flower which on the hills is found,
Which the passing feet of the shepherds for ever tear and wound,
Until the purple blossom is trodden into the ground."

Another vein, the elegiac, may be illustrated by the famous couplet inscribed by Simonides (early fifth century) on the tomb of the Spartan dead at Thermopylae: "Go, stranger, and tell the men of Lacedaemon that we lie here, obedient to their charge." Lyric poetry, as the name implies, was written to be sung to music. The choric ode, developed to great perfection in this same age, was accompanied both by music and dancing. The chorus celebrated the praises of gods or heroes or victors in the games; the odes of Pindar (early fifth century), one of the glories of Greek poetry, are mainly in honour of athletic victories. In a later section we shall see how

the lyric genius of the Greeks was interwoven with the epic in the Athenian drama.

9. Side by side with these forms of poetry the same period saw the rise of gnomic verses (*gnōmē* = a maxim), which embodied naïve reflexions upon life, counsels of policy or prudence, and at times ideal precepts of private and public action. These moral maxims were popular inductions from practical experience, analogous to the precepts, "Know thyself," "Nothing in excess," "Power will reveal the man," that gained currency in the Greek world in this epoch. We may compare "Piers Plowman" or the "moral" Gower in early English literature. They evidence the growing moral consciousness of the race, and the typically Greek ideal of self-restraint and moderation in the use of power (*sōphrosynē*). Poetic teachers, such as the Athenian statesman Solon (early sixth century), urged this ideal in face of the besetting temptation of a people ever eager to grasp occasion for exercise of power, and the constant danger of individual ambition.

10. "The "moral" poetry of the seventh and sixth centuries is of special significance, if we realise that among the Greeks the poets were recognised teachers of morality and religion. Despite the influence of the Delphic oracle and of the religious revival in the sixth century, of which we shall speak later, the Greeks as a race were never priestridden; religious faith was influenced not by the priest but by the poet. It was not that the Greeks lacked religious devotion; as in St. Paul's days they were if anything too "god-fearing"[1]; in their attachment to their religious worships they could be superstitious to extravagance. It was that the early epic poets, as Herodotus wrote, "made the Greek religion"; meaning that their treatment of the tales of gods

[1] Acts xvii. 22.

and heroes brought some system into the rich variety of local faiths and fixed the main outlines of belief for after-time. Later poets continued to render the same service, and no one can understand what poetry meant for the Greek people who does not realise its intimate association with religion and moral education. Moreover, it is through the poets that the tales of Greek religion have influenced later civilisation. Roman poetry drew copiously upon these stories. But already in the sixth century philosophy was coming forward with a rival claim to teach the truth as to the world and life.

(*C*) **The Birth of Philosophy**.—11. "The desire of knowledge," wrote Aristotle, "is natural to all men," and again, voicing Plato, "Philosophy is the child of wonder." Certainly to the Greeks the curiosity to know the causes of things, to probe their inner nature, came as a natural desire; in the childhood of their history they had all the child's desire to know how and why. What is noteworthy is that they thought for thinking's sake, not merely as a means to practical ends. Unlike the Chaldean astronomers, who merely collected stores of observations as a basis for fantastic interpretation, the Greek thinkers strove to understand the world as a rational world, with system and unity of structure. They pursued this goal with confidence and courage, and displayed in their task a genius for scientific hypothesis and logical method. "No sooner," writes Professor Burnet, "did a Greek philosopher learn half-a-dozen geometrical propositions, and hear that the phenomena of the heavens recur in cycles, than he set to work to look for law everywhere in nature, and, with a splendid audacity, . . . to construct a system of the universe."[1]

The age of expansion in the seventh and sixth

[1] *Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 29.

centuries gave the occasion for the birth of Greek philosophy. The ferment which we have noted in the field of politics seethed also in the minds of thinking men. A larger world was unfolded to view; traditional customs were seen to be of local and temporary concern; old tales were disproved by wider experience—the Scylla and Charybdis of the Odyssey were found to be mere natural phenomena, a rock and a whirlpool. The frequent migrations of the period severed the connexion between early faiths and special localities.

12. The first philosophers arose at Miletus in Ionia; schools of thought, each with a character and genius of its own, appeared also in South Italy and Sicily. All alike sought for unity and principle amid the seeming variety and unrest of nature. They tried to find a single primary substance or ultimate principle (*physis* = Nature) as the permanent amid change; Thales, the earliest in date, held this principle to be Water; others found it in Vapour or Fire or in the combination or harmony of elements.

Three features distinguish these early Greek efforts after scientific explanation from any that had gone before. In the first place, as mentioned above, they were scientific in procedure; observation is widened by experiment and illumined by hypothesis: restricted as were the range of known facts and the instruments of research, the aim throughout is the discovery of scientific principles and of necessary connexion amid the changes of phenomena. "Nothing can arise out of nothing": "naught happens for nothing, but everything from a ground and of necessity." In the course of two or three generations they discovered the sphericity of the earth, the true theory of eclipses, and that the earth revolves round the centre of our system as do the other planets.[1] In the

[1] Burnet: *Early Greek Philosophy*, pp. 26, 27.

second place, they gave up the fruitless search after a first beginning of the universe out of a primeval Nothing, and set themselves to find the underlying reality of what *is*. In the third place, whereas eastern science, such as it is, is anonymous, the inherited property of a caste or guild,[1] that of Greece bears from the first the stamp of individuality. It is true that the earliest thinkers founded schools, like Plato and Aristotle at a later day, but these schools, despite their corporate tradition, are the creation of individual thinkers whose names survived and whose personality dominated to an increasing degree the course of philosophical development.

It lies beyond our present task to trace the logical development of these theories. The conviction grew that all nature is in ceaseless change, that the world as it appears to sense is ever a becoming and a ceasing to be, nowhere a being, anything of which we can say "it *is*."

13. It was physical nature that first arrested the attention of these thinkers. Not that the distinction, so familiar and yet so mysterious to modern thought, between the material and the spiritual had as yet been clearly drawn. Anaximenes of Miletus, for instance, held that soul is vapour. But it could hardly escape note that the same instability and change that was present everywhere in Nature infected also the world of belief and custom, of men's thoughts and actions. We have seen that the age was one of constant political revolution, of rapid development of ideas, of general social and moral unrest. So the problem arose: are all laws and institutions, all moral and religious beliefs, a mere matter of transitory value, "conventions" artificially set up by human ordinance? Or was there some *physis* or natural morality, some unchanging law, eternal and divine, of which changing conventions were the passing

[1] Burnet: *Early Greek Philosophy*, p. 34.

expression? We shall return to this current of ethical thought in the next chapter: it belonged especially to the later fifth century, but it had its source in the earlier inquiries into Nature.

14. The extension of men's range of experience, the growth of philosophy, and the awakening of moral aspirations, were bound to result in scepticism in regard to the traditional religion. But scepticism was confined to the few who thought about these things; the masses were untouched by its influence. Anaxagoras might proclaim that the sun was not a god but a stone: the fifth-century Athenians in a spirit of devout hostility condemned him for impiety. This hostility was due not to dislike of free discussion, but to loyalty to the state, which led them to resist any religious speculation that might prove subversive of established worships. One of the charges brought against Socrates by his accusers was that of introducing new deities and teaching men to disbelieve in those worshipped by the city. It is noteworthy that the opposition to philosophers was led not by priests but by politicians.

The sixth century witnessed, side by side with the rational inquiries of the philosophers, a strange and widespread revival of emotional religion. The home of the movement was in south Italy, but it profoundly influenced the whole Hellenic world. Teachers of new doctrines about the soul, ascribed to a mythical Orpheus, preached the need of purification and the hope of future reward for the initiated. The Orphic teaching spread through organised communities of the initiated and was closely associated with the old-established "mysteries" or initiatory rites at sacred places like Eleusis in Attica. The doctrines were crude and full of superstition; purification from sin meant observance of weird taboos and the performance of external ceremonies; the life

beyond the grave meant a paradise of material enjoyment, in Plato's indignant phrase, "eternal drunkenness." In the fifth century, poets such as Pindar and Aeschylus endeavoured to find a loftier interpretation for such doctrines, and to accommodate popular religion to the claims of a more enlightened morality. The philosophers met the poets with zealous opposition. Almost with one voice they condemn the traditional religion of the Homeric poems: "Homer and Hesiod," wrote Xenophanes, "have ascribed to the gods all things that are a shame and a disgrace among men, thefts and adulteries and deception of one another." "Homer," said Heraclitus of Ephesus, "should be turned out of the lists and whipped, and Archilochus likewise." In south Italy the Pythagoreans were influenced by Orphic doctrines, and at a later date many of their tenets were applied by Plato in the service of an exalted spiritual idealism. But Plato's interpretation of the body as the tomb of the soul, and his philosophic conception of immortality and rewards and punishments in a future life, were far removed from anything that the vulgar found in Orphism and the Mysteries. The purification which he taught was rigorously scientific in method. A wide gulf parted popular religion and its poetic interpreters on the one hand from philosophy with its scientific and rational method on the other. The "quarrel between poetry and philosophy," of which Plato spoke in the *Republic*, was of long standing in Plato's day; it is the conflict not of art and knowledge—for these have no quarrel—but between the rival claims of religious tradition and scientific reason to teach truth.

(*D*) **Conclusion.**—15. The brilliant expansion of culture in political life, in poetry and in thought which we have sketched presents in its development an ordered sequence of forms. What the early Ionian thinkers noted in the

phenomena of Nature is true of themselves; everywhere there is variety, nothing in their life or thought is stationary or at rest. The development is so ordered as to comprehend in due succession the whole range of forms that institutions, poetry, and knowledge are capable of assuming in human experience. In the sphere of politics, monarchy, aristocracy of birth, aristocracy of wealth, despotism, and democracy are evolved in natural sequence. So poetry opens with narrative of action in the epics; expression of the subjective feeling of the poet follows; and we shall see how the spirit of epic and that of lyric poetry are united in the Attic drama, the culminating achievement of the Hellenic genius in poetry. Once more, philosophical development manifests everywhere a logical order of ideas, each school influencing the others, till the products of the thought of all are comprehended in their due relationships in the great constructive systems of the fourth century. This was the cardinal service of Greece to civilisation, at once to create in action and to determine in thought the fundamental landmarks and forms in almost every field of life and knowledge. The terms in use to-day to express these fundamental distinctions and groupings—in politics, monarchy, aristocracy, democracy, nay, the word politics itself; in literature, epic, lyric, dramatic, tragedy, comedy; in knowledge, the names of the arts and sciences—poetry, physics, astronomy, mathematics, history, philosophy itself—are all terms invented by the Greeks. No race has ever grasped with so clear an insight and defined with such precision the leading aspects of life and knowledge. It is because of this marvellous gift of intellectual judgment, and because in their life and deeds they first realised the objects for which these terms stand, that all succeeding civilisations have been content and indeed forced to build upon the foundations which they laid.

CHAPTER IV

GREEK CIVILISATION: (II) THE GREATNESS OF ATHENS

(*A*) **Athens in the Fifth Century.**
§ 1. Athens the centre of Greek culture in the fifth century.
§ 2. Contrast of Athens and Sparta.
§ 3. Athens and the Persian wars—the Athenian Empire.
§ 4. Athenian democracy in the age of Pericles.
§ 5. The fall of Athens and the rise of Macedon.
(*B*) **Art and Literature of the Age of Pericles.**
§ 6. The beautification of Athens by Pericles: architecture and sculpture.
§ 7. The Parthenon.
§ 8. The Attic drama in the fifth century: characteristics.
§ 9. The tragic and comic poets.
§ 10. Prose literature: history, oratory, philosophy.
(*C*) **The Thought of the Age: Socrates and Plato.**
§ 11. The New Culture of the fifth century.
§ 12. The Sophists and their influence.
§ 13. Socrates' personality.
§ 14. Socrates' method and teaching.
§ 15. Plato and Athenian democracy.
§ 16. The ideal of the life of contemplation.

(*A*) **Athens in the Fifth Century.**—1. It was at Athens in the fifth century that Greek civilisation attained its climax. Athens was then the chief political and commercial city of the Hellenic world, and to her flowed all the currents of literature, art and knowledge. In the famous phrase of her statesman Pericles, she became "the school of Hellas." History affords no parallel to the wealth and variety of creative genius that Athens in this century produced or gathered to herself from all quarters of Greece. In a single city, whose free population was not greater than that of a moderate-sized English town, there dwelt within three

generations of human lifetime statesmen such as Themistocles and Pericles, the three tragic poets Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, the comic poet Aristophanes, Pheidias and his marvellous school of sculptors, the historians Herodotus and Thucydides, the philosopher Anaxagoras, the greatest of all human teachers—Socrates, and Socrates' immortal disciple Plato. All these stand in the foremost rank of human genius. There were numberless others, statesmen and poets and thinkers, many of them little more than names for after-time, who yet, in a less brilliant epoch, would have been among the famous men of history. It seems as though the individuality of Greek civilisation strove for the brief period of its maturity to surpass the bounds of possible achievement.

2. Athens rose to greatness as a commercial and maritime city. Earlier than the seventh century she had united Attica in a single commonwealth, and had transformed by gradual stages a monarchical into an aristocratic government, and published a code of law. The seventh century saw a rapid development of trade, followed by political unrest, the distribution of power on a basis of wealth, the rise and fall of a dynasty of tyrants, and the foundation of popular government. Before the period of the Persian wars (early fifth century) she could hold her own in home waters and had extended her commercial and diplomatic relations over both shores of the Aegean. Alike in capacity for political development and in freedom of intercourse with other cities, Athens presents a striking contrast to the state which in that age was dominant on the mainland, Sparta. From their home in the secluded valley of the Eurotas the Spartan aristocracy held the southern Peloponnesus in absolute subjection, and by their undisputed skill and courage in arms were recognised as the leading military power in

Greece. But Sparta was a barrack rather than a state; the training and life of her citizens were governed by the one aim of efficiency in war; she retained her primitive institutions for centuries almost unchanged, and, scorning trade, guarded her borders rigorously from the intrusion of strangers. Sparta contributed little or nothing to the structure of Hellenic civilisation. She produced brave soldiers, but few statesmen of distinction; her more gifted citizens were objects of suspicion at home, and when freed from the atmosphere of Spartan tradition became easy victims of corruption. This makes us wonder at the fame that Sparta won in the eyes of contemporary Greece. When Plato despaired of the political salvation of Athens, it was towards Sparta that he looked for a remedy. The reason lay in this: that, narrow and unfruitful and oppressive as was the Spartan aristocracy, its stability, unity of principle and loyalty to the state seemed to furnish the needed complement to the restless and emotional democracy of Athens.

3. The wars with Persia afforded Athens her supreme opportunity. It was Athens who repelled at Marathon (490) the punitive expedition despatched by Darius to avenge her share in the revolt of the Asiatic Greeks. It was Athens who, in face of the great armament of Xerxes (480–479), when half Greece joined the invader and Sparta thought chiefly of the Peloponnese, triumphed with her navy at Salamis and stood forth as the champion of Hellenic freedom. Her citizens witnessed undismayed the destruction of their city by the invader. Once again it was Athens who, when the invader had been beaten back, declared her readiness to prolong the struggle till all the Greek cities on the Aegean had been freed from the Persian yoke. The natural issue of this resolve was the supremacy of Athens in the Aegean. At first the

leader of a maritime confederacy, she became in the middle of the fifth century the mistress of a maritime empire. The fortification of the city and its harbour, the Peiraeus, rendered her secure from her Spartan rivals on the land. Her fleets policed the Aegean waters, henceforward closed to Persia; she enjoyed a monopoly of eastern trade; almost all the island and coast cities of the Aegean acknowledged her supremacy and paid tribute for her protection; her government regulated their policy and institutions, and her tribunals were a court of international appeal. Never before had the ideal of Hellenic union seemed so near fulfilment as in the Athenian Empire in the age of Pericles (460-430 B.C.). The danger to Greek independence at this crisis of her history had been twofold. In the west, Carthage had attacked the Greeks of Sicily contemporaneously with the invasion of Greece by Xerxes; the triumph of the tyrant of Syracuse inaugurated a brilliant epoch of Syracusan empire. Henceforward, Syracuse is second only to Athens as a centre of Hellenic art and culture.

4. The government of the Athenian state was in the hands of the free citizen body. To the Greek the true life of the citizen was the service of the state in peace and war. At Sparta this conception was realised by the governing aristocracy; endowed with estates worked by the subject population they had leisure to devote their whole lives to military service. Pericles and his successors in the fifth century strove to make such a life possible for the democracy of Athens. The introduction of pay for attendance in the assembly and the law courts, which were occupied largely with political causes, was the means employed to effect this end. Over and above the business of local government, it was open to every citizen to attend in person, to vote and to speak, at the weekly meetings of the sovereign

assembly, where questions of foreign and imperial policy were determined, magistrates elected and their reports discussed and scrutinised. The council of 500 met daily to prepare legislation; and a tenth of the number sat as a permanent executive in the town hall for each month of the year. Panels of several hundred jurors, chosen by lot from the citizen body, adjudged on political and religious impeachments; the aristocratic poet Aristophanes pours bitter scorn on the litigious excesses of the Athenian "wasps." The spirit of faction ran high; the aristocratic party advocating peace and friendship with Sparta, the democratic party, with its strength in the maritime population, championing the extension of the empire over sea and land.

But when all allowance has been made for excesses of party spirit and individual ambition, the Athenian democracy was not unworthy of the ideals of the great statesman who established its supremacy. Pericles gave expression to that ideal in his speech in praise of the soldiers who fell in battle in the campaign of 431. The speech is recorded by the historian Thucydides, and the following passages may be quoted in illustration of his conception of Athenian democracy.

"Our form of government does not enter into rivalry with the institutions of others. We do not copy our neighbours, but are an example to them. It is true that we are called a democracy, for the administration is in the hands of the many and not of the few. But while the law secures equal justice to all alike in their private disputes, the claim of excellence is also recognised; and when a citizen is in any way distinguished, he is preferred to the public service, not as a matter of privilege, but as the reward of merit. Neither is poverty a bar, but

a man may benefit his country whatever be the obscurity of his condition. There is no exclusiveness in our public life. . . . We are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness. Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it. An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy. The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance but hesitate upon reflection. . . . To sum up, I say that Athens is the school of Hellas, and that the original Athenian in his own person seems to have the power of adapting himself to the most varied forms of action with the utmost versatility and grace. This is no passing and idle word, but truth and fact; and the assertion is verified by the position to which these qualities have raised the state. . . . For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valour, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity. Such is the city for which these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survives should gladly toil on her behalf."—*Thucydides* II. 37, 40, 41 (tr. Jowett).

5. The empire of Athens was short-lived. The last third of the fifth century saw the conflict between Athens and Sparta, in which almost all the Greek cities were involved on one or the other side, and which closed with the capture of Athens in 404. Her fall was due partly to internal dissension of parties, partly to the effort to extend her empire in the West—a task beyond her powers—partly to the aid given by Persia to her foes. The first half of the fourth century was marked by the brief supremacy of Sparta and Thebes. Political interest shifted gradually northwards, till in the middle of the century it centred in the rising power of Macedon. The Macedonians were a people akin to the Greeks in race and language; King Philip consolidated his monarchy, organised his army with its irresistible phalanx, extended his rule westwards over Thrace, and in 338 finally crushed the resistance of southern Greece by his crowning victory over Thebes and Athens at Chaeronea. Under the guidance of her patriotic statesman and orator Demosthenes, Athens had played a part not unworthy of her earlier championship of Greek independence. That independence was now lost for ever; with its loss Athens ceases to play a leading part in politics, though she long remained a seat of culture and learning, and the history of Greece becomes the history of the Macedon conquerors.

(*B*) **Art and Literature of the Age of Pericles.**—6. We have said that all currents of Greek activity were gathered together at Athens in the fifth century. This is true, in the first place, of the arts of architecture, sculpture and painting. The sixth century had seen a rapid development of these arts; that may be traced in the case of the two former by a comparison of the early works with the Elgin marbles in our national museum. Athens had been destroyed by the Persian invaders, and in the

next two generations statesmen set themselves to make the new city worthy of her imperial position. Pericles in particular strove to train the citizens to a love of the beautiful through his buildings and the sculptures that adorned them. In an age when books were inaccessible to the mass of men, it is impossible to overestimate the value in education of noble buildings. The Acropolis of Athens, with its entrance portal, its temples, and its statues, rendered the same service to the Athenians of that age as the richly carved cathedrals to the towns of mediaeval Europe. In a passage of the *Republic* Plato concludes his argument that the young rulers of the ideal city shall be surrounded with an environment of grace and beauty with these words—

"Ought we to confine ourselves to superintending our poets, and compelling them to impress on their productions the likeness of a good moral character, on pain of not composing among us; or ought we to extend our superintendence to the professors of every other craft as well, and forbid them to impress those signs of an evil nature, of dissoluteness, of meanness, and of ungracefulness, either on the likenesses of living creatures, or on buildings, or any other work of their hands; altogether interdicting such as cannot do otherwise from working in our city, that our guardians may not be reared amongst images of vice, or upon unwholesome pastures, culling much every day by little and little from many places, and feeding upon it, until they insensibly accumulate a large mass of evil in their inmost souls? Ought we not, on the contrary, to seek out artists of another stamp, who by the power of genius can trace out the nature of the fair and the graceful, that our young men, dwelling as it were in a healthful region, may drink in good from every quarter, whence any emanation from noble works may strike upon

their eye or their ear, like a gale wafting health from salubrious lands, and win them imperceptibly, from their earliest childhood, into resemblance, love and harmony with the true beauty of reason."—*Republic*, III, p. 401 (tr. Jowett).

No one who has passed his youth under the shadow of some noble cathedral or within the walls of one of our ancient colleges will dispute this judgment on the value of the subtle and unconscious influence of the arts on the character and mind of man.

7. The chief of the buildings raised by Pericles on the Acropolis was in the temple of the maiden Athene, the Parthenon. The sculptures that adorned the temple, the work of Pheidias and his fellow-craftsmen, have never been equalled in any age. Early in the nineteenth century most of those that remained were brought to England by Lord Elgin and are now in the British Museum. In the pediments were represented the birth of the goddess Athene from the head of Zeus and the struggle between Athene and the sea-god Poseidon for the possession of the soil of Attica. On the metopes that adorned the outer band of stone that surrounded the temple above the line of Doric columns were sculptured scenes of conflict from the heroic legends of the contest of Centaurs and Lapithae. In contrast to the scenes depicted on the outside of the temple, the frieze that girt the outer wall of the cella (nave) presented in low relief the civic life of contemporary Athens, the religious procession of the Panathenaic festival, men in chariots and on horseback, sheep and cattle led to sacrifice, the magistrates of the city, musicians, and the maidens who bore the sacred woven robe as an offering to Athene seated among the Olympian deities. The central figure of the whole, the colossal statue of Athene, wrought in gold and ivory by

Pheidias, has perished. But the marbles in our national museum, more than any other monuments of antiquity, reveal to the Englishman of to-day the qualities of energy and repose, lofty idealism and serene beauty, that marked the art of the age of Pericles.

8. In the preceding chapter we observed that new forms of poetry arose during the seventh, sixth and early fifth centuries in different regions of the Greek world. The Ionian colonies in Asia Minor were the home of lyric and elegiac poetry; the choric ode developed alike in eastern, central and western Greece, Stesichorus lived in Sicily, Simondes in the Aegean isle of Keos, Pindar in Boeotia; comedy had its birth in Sicily. The beginnings of prose literature are traceable in the sixth-century chronicles and philosophy of Ionia and Sicily. The predominant interest of Athens must not blind us to the rich and varied culture that arose among the Sicilian Greeks. These various poetic currents were fused at Athens in the fifth century in the supreme achievement of Greek poetic genius, the Attic drama. To describe or illustrate the nobility of Greek tragedy lies beyond the scope of this volume; as Greek sculptures can be directly studied in the Elgin marbles, so in translations of Greek plays students will obtain, if not a direct, yet by far the best introduction to their character and significance. But a few words must be said here as to the relation of the Greek drama to the history and life of the race. (i) In the dramatic episodes or acts, and in the choric odes sung in the intervals of the action, we see conjoined in a higher unity the two great streams of poetic development in the past—the epic or narrative and the lyric. The choric odes were accompanied by music and dancing—the three arts thus all finding expression in the drama. (ii) The dramatic festivals, like the great games, were a religious

observance held in honour of the nature-god, Dionysus, under the presidency of the priest of Dionysus, and with the accompaniment of religious ceremonial. In the centre of the orchestra or dancing-place of the chorus stood the altar of the god. Attendance was a religious duty; since the plays were performed in the open air, a vast concourse of spectators—perhaps as many as 30,000—could view them simultaneously. These features, and the fact that, in tragedy at all events, the plots were drawn—with poetic freedom—from the religious tales of gods and heroes, intensified the intimate connexion between dramatic poetry and religious and moral teaching. Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides—though the last-named differed widely from the two former in his philosophical scepticism—are alike in this, that they claim to invest the religious traditions of the race with deep spiritual and ethical meaning. On their insistence on the ideal of self-restraint and principle (*sōphrosynē*) as the expression of the moral law; in their condemnation of presumption (*hybris*), which engenders tyranny and calls down the nemesis of divine vengeance, they are at one with historians like Herodotus and philosophers like Plato. (iii) The poets, like the athletes in the games, presented their dramas in contest for a prize. When we remember that each presented four new plays in competition, and that the festivals were many and frequent, we realise the wealth of dramatic creation in the Athens of this epoch; those that remain to us—the seven tragedies of Aeschylus, the seven of Sophocles, the eighteen of Euripides, and the eleven comedies of Aristophanes—form only a small fragment of a great body of dramatic production on the part of these and many other poets of the age. Further, the constant attendance at these representations and the practice in judging the awards

furnished an educative influence of extraordinary value to the Athenian public. As in politics, so in the domain of literature, the Athenian citizen must have been, if not "an initiator," yet at all events a "sound judge" of aesthetic merits.

9. Tragedy had established itself in Athens before the Persian wars. But it was that great crisis in Athenian history, and the resulting expansion of Athenian power, that gave the impulse to the drama. Aeschylus in his youth had fought at Marathon, and his "Persians" dramatised the naval victory at Salamis. Sophocles' art is the flawless expression of the energy and idealism of the age of Pericles. The third great tragic poet, Euripides, gives utterance to the emotional and intellectual interests that awoke in the last generation of the fifth century, when Athens began to reflect upon her past. But if Tragedy gave expression to spiritual ideals and aspirations, it is in Attic Comedy that we find the most intimate relation to the public life of the state. Aristophanes, like most of the comic writers, was a conservative; his plays, personal and Rabelaisian to a degree inconceivable under conditions of modern life, caricatured and satirised with brilliant genius—the lyric songs are of extraordinary beauty—the new tendencies in politics, poetry and philosophy that were stirring in the last third of the century. In the "Knights" he held up to ridicule the democratic statesman Cleon, in the "Wasps" the Athenian jurors, in the "Birds" Athens' wild dreams of imperial expansion, in the "Frogs" the art of Euripides—the representative in tragedy of the New Culture, in the "Clouds" the character and speculations of Socrates. The comedy of the fourth century ceased to be personal, and depicted types of social character: the Greek "comedy of manners" was the model imitated by the Roman Plautus and Terence,

and was analogous to the comedy of Molière or of the English Restoration in modern times. The same period witnessed the decline of Tragedy. What has survived of the Tragedy of the fifth century abides with the Pheidian sculptures as the supreme creation of the Greek genius in art. In the words of a modern poet, thinking of the drama in which Aeschylus portrayed the mighty Titan, giver of fire and the arts to man, enchained on the "frosty Caucasus" by the ruthless insolence of the younger God—

"Dead the great chryselephantine God, as dew last evening shed:
Dust of earth or foam of ocean is the symbol of his head:
Earth and ocean shall be shadows when Prometheus shall be dead"[1]

10. The hundred years from the beginning of the age of Pericles (*c.* 450) to the Macedonian conquest were the great age of Greek prose. We have noted that prose is a later form of expression than poetry, and that its origins are to be traced in the chronicles and philosophic writings of the sixth century. In the epoch under review prose developed in the three fields of history, oratory and philosophy. Herodotus (c. 450), justly called the "Father of History," inasmuch as he was the first to inform his narrative with a clearly defined purpose and to pursue the path of critical inquiry, wrote to celebrate the victory of free Greece over the pride of Persia: in his ethical aim and the dramatic character of his presentation he reminds us of Aeschylus. A generation later Thucydides, the Athenian, wrote the history of the war between Athens and Sparta. The rise of democracy called into birth the art of public speech. Rhetoric had its origin in Sicily, but quickly made a home in Athens. Not only did oratory reach perfection with Demosthenes in the fourth century, but the influence of the rhetorical schools shaped the Greek language into an instrument of expression for

[1] Swinburne: "Athens."

prose historians and philosophers. Apart from his greatness as a philosopher, Plato is the supreme master of Greek prose style. There was hardly a single form of literary creation, either in poetry or in prose, that failed to find a great master in the Athens of the fifth and fourth centuries.

(*C*) **The Thought of the Age: Socrates and Plato.**—11. We saw in the previous chapter how criticism of moral beliefs and institutions arose naturally out of the effort to find a permanent substance underlying the ceaseless changes of physical nature. Interest in ethical inquiry was fostered both by the special conditions of public life in democratic states like Athens, and by the aspiration after a more lofty and rational standard of morals awakened in the minds of poets and philosophers. The hundred years between 450 and 350 B.C. were a period of extraordinary fertility, both of criticism and construction, in the field of moral and political thought: resulting in a momentous revolution in the spiritual life of mankind. For the first time in human history the clear light of reason was directed upon problems of life and conduct. "Man is the measure of all things"; this utterance of Protagoras goes to the root of the Greek "Enlightenment." A widespread conviction arose that both in the special arts and professions, and in the art of living in general, an outfit of knowledge was the indispensable condition of success. A demand arose for a new type of education, resting not on tradition or custom but on science. Manuals of instruction (*technai* = arts) were composed which applied theory to practice; the professors of the "New Culture" brought knowledge to bear on the arts of war—the early fourth century saw the rise of a professional soldiery—music and government, as well as on more specialised arts, such as

horsemanship, stagecraft and cookery. Above all, they taught the art of public speech, training young men of capacity and ambition in the all-powerful instrument of persuasion in the assembly and the law court. The rise of the art of rhetoric implied a revolution not merely in the character of public life, but in literature through the study of grammar and literary style. Moreover it influenced alike the politician and the painter, the historian Thucydides and the poet Euripides. Words are symbols of thoughts; and the new education in the expression of moral and political ideas involved analysis of the ideas themselves.

12. The teachers of the New Culture were called Sophists. The term meant Professors of Wisdom; it had not yet received from Plato the implication that the wisdom they professed was illusory. These men came from all quarters of the Greek world: travelling from city to city they gave public lectures and offered instruction in all branches of knowledge. Protagoras of Abdera in Thrace, for example, professed to make his hearers better in the management of affairs, both public and private; Hippias of Elis claimed to be a master of every art and craft. The gifted youth of Greece listened eagerly to the new teachers. They were no sect, bound by a common body of doctrine; if we seek for a modern parallel, we find it in the influence of present-day journalism, or in the stimulus given to the best popular thought of the last generation by writers like Huxley, Ruskin and Matthew Arnold. In the field of morals individual Sophists differed widely in their conclusions; in regard to the problem of nature and convention, some based morality on a natural law, unwritten and divine; others held that the sole law of nature was that might is right, and that justice and law were mere conventional restraints imposed by the weak

upon the strong; others again, like Protagoras, that there was no law of nature and that the conventions of each state should be accepted and observed. It is true that the New Culture made for scepticism in morals and religion, and that its influence was bitterly opposed by conservatives such as Aristophanes. But it was constructive even more than destructive; critical analysis of traditional beliefs was an indispensable prerequisite if morality was to be based on rational principles; the free inquiry of the Sophists heralded the great constructive systems of Plato and Aristotle.

13. By far the greatest of these teachers was the Athenian, Socrates (469–399). Unlike the rest, he never left his city save on public service in war. In an age rich above all others in genius, his personality was the most unique and the most impressive. Grotesque in gait and features among a people exceptionally susceptible to the influence of physical beauty, and eccentric in habit and demeanour, he would stand in the street for hours immersed in thought. Poor all his life, for he would take no pay for the exercise of what he regarded as a divine mission, he held aloof from the recognised avenues of public distinction save when citizen duty called upon him to come forward, and then fearlessly resisted both democracy and despotism. Socrates, as Plato tells us, was utterly unlike any other man of his age and race. The secret of his influence lay in his personality and conversation. Alike in his repellent external appearance, in his love for the city and city life, and in the magic of his words and thought, he reminds us at times of Dr. Johnson. He spent his life in conversation with all sorts and conditions of men and women, conversation which Plato describes as "ridiculous on first hearing; his talk is of packmen and smiths and cobblers, and he

is always repeating the same things in the same words, so that any ignorant or inexperienced person might feel disposed to laugh at him; but words which in their heart are the only words which have a meaning in them, and also the most divine, abounding in fair images of virtue, and of the widest comprehension, or rather extending to the whole duty of a good and honourable man."

14. His words and life had a single purpose, to convince men of their ignorance and direct them to knowledge of the good. "An unexamined life is not worth living." The story goes that the Delphic oracle had declared him the wisest of men; how could this be, he asked himself, since God alone is wise and he, Socrates, knew nothing of wisdom? One thing at least he knew—his ignorance; while others thought themselves wise when they were not. This is the "irony" of Socrates, his own profession of ignorance as he questioned his fellow-men as to their principles and ends of their conduct. He set himself to examine the moral ideas that were bandied about on men's lips—courage, beauty, temperance, and the like—in order to determine their essential nature, to define them, so that knowledge might furnish a stable standard and rule of action. We may picture Socrates asking the modern Englishman what precisely he meant by such terms as honour, or gentleman, or freedom. "Induction and the search for definitions"—this is how Aristotle summarises his service to philosophic method. Virtue, he said, was knowledge and vice, ignorance; or to quote his famous paradox, "No one errs of his free will." Socrates' inquiries were directed largely to convincing his hearers of their ignorance, or, as we may put it, to awakening them out of their complacency; Plato compares him to a gadfly sent by God to sting the noble horse—the Athenian people—into self-criticism, or again

to a spiritual midwife, who brings to birth true thoughts in the souls of men. His teaching thus seems negative rather than constructive, for he disclaimed the name of teacher; he knew that knowledge of the aim of life must be won by each man for himself, and that his own task was but to destroy the ignorance that blinded his hearer's insight into self. We may gather some of the more positive features of Socrates' conversation from the memoir of his pupil Xenophon; for instance, his conviction of a reasonable purpose in human action and in Nature, and of the supremacy of goods of the soul—above all, of knowledge—among the many so-called "goods" of life. At the age of seventy Socrates was accused before a popular tribunal on the charges of impiety and corrupting youth and was condemned to death. We can easily understand the temper of his judges. Their hostility was political rather than theological. Though a conservative in his practice, his spirit of rational inquiry was incompatible with the preservation of the traditional faiths of the city; he was no democrat, and among his friends had been those who had brought ruin upon the Athenian Empire; moreover, his defence in court was an uncompromising and almost contemptuous championship of his life and mission. He was condemned to die by drinking hemlock, a martyr to the cause of reason and free inquiry.

15. Among the disciples of Socrates was Plato (427–347). It lies beyond our scope to track the golden stream of thought that flows through the Platonic dialogues. Plato was not merely a great constructive philosopher, but was inspired by an ardent passion for practical reform. Both aims find expression in the *Republic*. If we are to attempt the impossible and characterise the thought of him whose proud boast it was to be "the spectator of all time and all existence," we

may say that Plato, influenced alike by Socrates' search for ethical definitions and the conclusions, noted above, of the early Ionian philosophers, turned in his quest for truth from the world of sense and change to that of thought, and found at once the true objects of scientific knowledge and the source of reality and being in an intellectual heaven. There the soul of the philosopher, freed from the prisonhouse of the body, was destined to behold beauty in itself and goodness in itself, the real originals of which the changing objects of sense were imperfect copies. The other-worldliness of Plato's philosophy, and this startling inversion of the popular opinion that finds in objects of sense the standard for judging thought, are reflected in his attitude towards practical politics and the life of Athens in his day. That life he unreservedly condemned. He proclaimed the need of a radical conversion both of the individual soul and of the spirit prevalent in the state. In his deep insight into human nature and his bitter sense of the hopelessness of the present constitution and spirit of society, we find a modern parallel in Tolstoi. The individual Athenian seemed to him to have been swept away on a tide of emotional license, the Athenian state to be rent by party faction and the self-aggrandisement of its leaders; if the souls of men or human society were to win salvation, it could be only through austere discipline and a revolution in the principles of life and government. His remedy was to place power in the hands of those who know. Philosophers must be kings, and kings philosophers. His meaning is that those who, as the fruit of long moral and intellectual training, have attained to knowledge and love of the supreme good or purpose of the universe are thereby alone qualified to form the character of the citizens and direct the policy of the state. In sharp contrast to the ideal of Periclean democracy, Plato

preaches "professorial socialism." In a famous simile in the sixth book of the *Republic* he likens the Athenian people to the captain of a ship, a good-natured but somewhat sluggish master, easily influenced by the flattering of the artful mariners, who rival one another in cajoling him to entrust the helm to one of themselves. None of them has even learnt the pilot's craft or has the true knowledge which alone avails to guide the vessel aright. All the while the true pilot who is master of his art is neglected and abused. Thus the Athenian *demos* had fallen into the hands of unscrupulous and incompetent politicians, while the philosopher—the true ruler—was condemned to the inactivity of private life. Only when his claim to rule should be acknowledged could salvation come to the Athenian state.

16. Plato failed to reform his native city, and Athens pursued her set course of democratic policy until the advent of the Macedonian conqueror. But his condemnation of human practice was also his confession of faith in the ideal, and the ideal was fruitful beyond expectation. The conviction, expressed in the *Republic*, that the highest life is that not of pleasure or power, but of philosophical contemplation, remained the governing ideal of ancient thought. When the city-state lost its independence and the career of free public activity was closed to the Greek citizen, the best minds busied themselves more and more with the pursuit of knowledge. Aristotle, who is often contrasted with Plato, yet builds at every point on his master's foundations and is rather to be regarded as the first great Platonist, is at one with him in the belief that the life of philosophy is that in which the soul finds fullest satisfaction and approaches most nearly to the divine. In the centuries that followed, the same conviction was shared alike by Platonists and Aristotelians, by

Stoics and Epicureans. Nor was it confined to the Pagan world. Stripped of its peculiarly intellectual interpretation as the life of philosophy, the ideal of contemplative activity dominated mediaeval Christianity. The Mary and Martha of the Gospels became the types of the theoretic and active life, and the former had chosen the better part. The institution of monasticism, the writings of Dante, and the sculptures that adorn the cathedrals of the Middle Age, are evidence of the hold which this conviction, the product conjointly of the Christian and the Hellenic genius, had won over the spiritual aspirations of mankind. Plato, like all the greatest of the Greeks, whether in literature or philosophy, stands for something of universal value. Whenever the spirit of man turns from the world of sense and change towards that which is eternal, unchanging, and One, whether it be in intellectual or religious contemplation, it can claim kinship with the genius of Plato.

CHAPTER V

GREEK CIVILISATION: (III) ALEXANDER AND HIS SUCCESSORS

(*A*) **Alexander.**
§ 1. Project of Greek conquest of the Persian Empire.
§ 2. Realised by Alexander—his conquests.
§ 3. The Hellenisation of the East.
§ 4. Alexander's personality.
§ 5. The successors of Alexander: Hellenism and the Eastern world.
(*B*) **Hellenistic Culture.**
§ 6. The diffusion of Hellenism and fall of the city-state.
§ 7. Governing conditions of the Hellenistic age.
§ 8. Literature and art.
§ 9. Aristotle and previous thought.
§ 10. The work of Aristotle in philosophy.
§ 11. The Stoics and Epicureans.
§ 12. The Greek ideal of life and Christianity.

(*A*) **Alexander.**—1. Alexander stands at the close of an old and the beginning of a fresh chapter in Greek history. The invasion of Xerxes a century and a half before had opened a new phase in the great contest between East and West. The conquest of Persia by Alexander terminates this episode of the historic drama. From the first had been made manifest the immeasurable superiority in war of a trained citizen army, animated by loyalty to the free city-state, over the vast but ill-disciplined levies whose sole bond of union was their common subjection to a Persian despot. Persia came to recognise this superiority, and before the close of the fifth century had welcomed Greek condottieri into her service, while by her diplomacy and her gold she kept Greece disunited

at home. The retreat of the ten thousand mercenaries from the heart of the Persian Empire to the Euxine, through a difficult country, amid a hostile population, and harassed by a hostile army, had shown that it was not merely on Hellenic soil that Greece was unconquerable: from that moment (401–400) the project of a war of revenge, of a Greek invasion of Persia, loomed in the minds of Greek captains and statesmen. Philosophers and political idealists, like Plato and Isocrates, saw in a national crusade against the barbarian the opportunity for Hellenic union and the remedy for domestic strife. But the city-states of Greece cherished their independence too dearly to tolerate political union. The union was imposed from without by the Macedonian sovereign. Philip, supreme after Chaeronea by force of arms, declared for the long-projected enterprise; his army was marshalled for war, when he fell at the hand of the assassin. The task of realisation fell to his son Alexander.

2. Alexander crossed the Hellespont in the spring of 334, conquered the coastlands of Asia Minor, and in the following year won his first great victory over King Darius in person at Issus, at the north-east corner of the Levant. The beaten king offered him the western half of his empire to the Euphrates; the terms were haughtily refused. The capture of Tyre in 332, after a resistance that forecasts that of Carthage or of Jerusalem—the Semites were terrible when besieged—gave Alexander the sea-power in the eastern Mediterranean, and was followed by the conquest of Canaan and Egypt. In 331 he advanced to the heart of the Persian Empire, and won his crowning triumph over Darius at Gaugamela in the valley of the Tigris. The death of the fugitive king in the succeeding summer made manifest Alexander's true

purpose to the world. Hitherto the King of Macedon and Captain-General of the Greeks, he now stood forward as the successor of his fallen enemy, as the "King of Kings" in Darius' stead. The five succeeding years witnessed a series of marvellous campaigns and marches, in which Alexander subdued the Eastern satrapies to the Oxus and Jaxartes and beyond the Hindu-Kush, pierced the Khyber Pass, conquered the Punjâb, and traversed the Indus valley to its mouth. When his army refused to march east to the Ganges, the fleet returned by the Persian Gulf, the land forces through the terrible desert of the Mekran. Alexander was back at Susa, the old Persian capital, in the spring of 324. The next few months were mainly devoted to the organisation of his vast empire. By June 323 he had gathered at Babylon a great army for the conquest of Arabia. There, stricken suddenly by fever, he died after a ten days' illness, at the age of thirty-three.

3. The campaigns of Alexander opened a new world to Greece, and by extending the range of knowledge had profound results on scientific thought. But his great achievement was the diffusion of Hellenism over the Eastern world. The political genius of Alexander is most evident in his deliberate purpose to fuse into one the Hellenic and the Oriental spirit. On the one hand he adopted Persian state, Persian dress, Persian customs; he practised and encouraged intermarriage, recognised the religions of the conquered peoples, and became in all things an Eastern to the Easterns. On the other hand, he incorporated Persians into the phalanx, trained their youth in Hellenic culture, and promoted their nobility in his service. Few of his Macedonian followers were able to share these great ideas; we read of periodic resentment and mutiny in the years following

330, provoking Alexander to the rare acts of severity that form a striking contrast to his generous and humane nature. His chief instrument in welding together East and West was the foundation of cities on the Hellenic model. The cities of the Persian Empire were few in number, a fact that explains the decisive finality of his victories over the army in the field. Alexander planted cities everywhere on his marches, in Egypt Alexandria—the most famous of them all in history,—in the Euphrates valley, in the far north-east, in Turkestan, on the Indus banks, on the shores of the Persian Gulf. Throughout the empire these cities, with their colonies of Macedonian and Hellenic settlers, formed abiding centres of Greek culture. As the outcome of this policy, followed out by his successors, the life of the vast region from the Aegean to the Indus, from the Caspian to Ethiopia, was transformed in a greater or less degree by the Hellenic spirit. Greek science took root in Babylon: the art, religion and political government of India received the permanent impress of the Greek mind. When we reflect that this achievement represents a mere fragment of Alexander's policy, accomplished in the few spare months between his campaigns, we realise that it has no parallel in human history.

4. The royal family of Macedonia claimed Greek descent, and Alexander was in all the essentials of character a Greek. At rare moments wild passions would break the bounds of his natural humanity and stern self-discipline, though for his few recorded acts of violence he showed an equally passionate remorse. Greek culture was not with him, as with many of his officers, a thin veneer that veiled the barbarian: its poetry and thought had stirred deeply his ardent and enthusiastic spirit. For three years of his youth, between the ages of thirteen and sixteen, he had been the pupil

of Aristotle, the greatest thinker of the age; his imagination was nourished on the poems of Homer; his court and camp were the scene of athletic and dramatic festivals; in the hour of vengeance on Thebes he spared the house of Pindar from the flames. When he sat as King of Kings on the throne of the great Darius, or when he assumed in Egypt the divine honours that marked the national Pharaoh, he was never the victim of his own glory, but remained in heart and mind a Greek. He possessed great physical strength and courage; risking his life with apparent recklessness in the field—on one occasion in India he leapt with three companions into a besieged city and was wounded nearly to death—the kings of the rude and warlike Macedonians had to hold their loyalty by personal prowess. No great historical personality is so entirely free from meanness of spirit as Alexander. Open-hearted, truthful, ardent in personal friendship, chivalrous alike to friends and enemies, possessed of a noble pride and love of honour, he bound his marshals and his soldiers by a strong tie of personal magnetism. The purity of his moral character was a proverb and a marvel to the age. With these qualities of mind and person were combined a clearness of insight, a capacity of adjusting means to ends, a supreme mastery of the art of war, and the rare union of political imagination and consummate statecraft. His hero of romance was the Achilles of the Iliad; but in Alexander we see grafted upon the ardour, courage and love of glory of the Homeric hero the rich heritage of moral and intellectual culture evolved by the Hellenic race in the long course of its history.

5. Tradition tells that the dying Alexander, when asked by his marshals to whom he bequeathed his empire, made answer, "To the strongest." For twenty years

the marshals fought for the inheritance: till the battle of Ipsus (in Phrygia: 301) determined the broad lines of partition. The Balkan Peninsula fell to Lysimachus. Ptolemy had occupied Egypt soon after the great emperor's death, and his successors held the country till its incorporation in the Roman Empire. The bulk of the empire—the Asiatic provinces from the Aegean to the Indus—fell to Seleucus, henceforward king of Asia. We cannot trace the detailed history of the conflicts of these dynasties through the two following centuries of storm and change. We shall touch on the history of the Greeks in Italy and Sicily—beyond the limits of Alexander's empire—and of Macedonia and her dependent states of Greece proper, in connexion with the growth of Rome. In the East, the two centres of Hellenism were on the Nile and the Euphrates. There the Macedonian dynasties—Greek in race, speech and culture—built up on Alexander's foundations the fabric of Hellenic civilisation. We shall note in a later section the general character of this "Hellenistic" age in art, literature and thought. The heaviest burden rested on the house of Seleucus. Macedonia and Egypt were compact states, homogeneous and comparatively easy of defence; the Asiatic kingdom presents the same lack of unity and cohesion as the older empire of Persia. Its monarchs were unable to contend alike with their rivals in Macedonia and Egypt and with the Iranian power of Parthia, which arose in the third century in the East. The Punjâb soon recovered independence; the satrapies east of the Euphrates valley fell to the Parthians; early in the second century the Seleucid kings found themselves restricted to the lands between the Euphrates and the Levant, cooped up between Parthia and Rome. A hundred years more and their power

ceased to be: the Roman legions confronted the Parthians on the Euphrates. But the house of Seleucus had achieved a great work in the history of civilisation; they had planted Hellenism in the Middle East, founded great cities in Babylonia and Syria, and furnished the meeting-ground for East and West. The debt was not one-sided: if Greek culture permeated Western Asia, the fusion of the religious genius of the East with the thought of Hellenism was fraught with momentous issues. It was at Antioch, the Syrian capital founded by the Seleucids, that the disciples of the faith which the East gave to the West were first called by the Greek name of Christians.

(*B*) **Hellenistic Culture.**—6. The diffusion of Hellenic culture over the Middle East was rendered possible through the political union of Greece under a despotic monarchy; and the price that Greece paid was the loss of civic independence. The city-state died hard. Individual cities continued to establish or regain a fitful independence. Under Macedon, as afterwards under Rome, they preserved local self-government; we have seen how Alexander and his successors founded municipalities by the hundred throughout their dominions. These cities were, in fact, the chief instrument of the spread of Hellenism. But the Greek city was no longer a sovereign state; with the advent of external control the spirit of political freedom passed away. We can understand the passionate resistance which Athens under Demosthenes offered to Philip, and the refusal of the Greek states to be blinded by the dazzling splendour of Alexander's victories to the real sacrifice those victories implied. They felt instinctively that a fatal blow had been struck at the roots whence Hellenism had grown up. So in fact it was; slowly but surely the Greek race

lost its creative vitality; loss of political freedom carried with it moral and intellectual decay. The future of Hellenism lay in its influence among non-Hellenic peoples.

7. We must realise that this decay was very gradual, and that Greek culture preserved a unique freshness and distinction through the long period of decline. The well-springs had been sapped; but the stream still flowed, though with scantier and more sluggish volume; and the waters were those of Greece. Our purpose here is to outline the general character of that culture in the so-called "Hellenistic" period, between the dominion of Alexander and that of Rome (330 to 30 B.C.). In a later chapter we shall speak of Hellenism under the Roman Empire. Two governing facts must be stated at the outset. First, the loss of civic independence meant that the serious business of government was no longer a concern to the individual citizen; literature and thought henceforward move in an atmosphere of personal interests and of social, as distinct from public life. Secondly, Greece is more and more conscious of her accomplished past; hitherto creative of the present and the future, she now becomes historical and reflective. Ages of creative action are always unhistorical; it is only when the impulse to creation is decaying and energy begins to flag that a race turns towards its past achievements to analyse and record. "The owl of Minerva does not start upon its flight till the evening shadows begin to fall."

8. The literature of the Hellenistic epoch is the product of these changed conditions. Broadly speaking, it is a literature of scholarship and learning, of criticism and reflexion, of imitation of old models—pouring new wine into old bottles—and closely dependent on the patronage of the great. Poetry is freshest where life

is most free; as in Sicily, beyond the range of the Macedonian Empire, or in Athens, the home of great traditions, where at least the show of independence was studiously preserved. The idylls of the Syracusan Theocritus, who wrote in Alexandria under the Second Ptolemy (*c.* 270 B.C.), are the last achievements of the Greek poetic genius that deserve to be mentioned side by side with Homer and the great dramatists; they created a new form of literature and have inspired the pastoral poetry of all succeeding times, the Eclogues of Virgil, Milton's *Lycidas* and Shelley's *Adonais*. In Athens flourished the "New Comedy" of Manners (320–250 B.C.), that portrayed typical characters and situations of social life. In comedy, epic and epigram the love interest between men and women is increasingly dominant; the Rhodian poet Apollonius, for example, reverting to the poetic models of early Greece, wrote in epic hexameters the story of the Argonauts and of the passion of Medea for Jason. The spirit of romance found beautiful expression in elegies that had their home in Alexandria. The same city, under the patronage of the Ptolemies, was the centre of Greek learning. The two great libraries—one containing 700,000 manuscripts—testify to the ardour with which Greek scholars collected the classics of the past; schools of critics and commentators were busy at interpretation; by the side of the scholar arose his parasite the pedant. It was an age at once of general culture and of specialist research. Geometricians like Euclid (under Ptolemy I) and geographers like Eratosthenes, the first to measure a degree of latitude on the earth's surface, carried forward the development of the special sciences. The history of the past was recorded with new power of criticism; Polybius (210–*c.* 128), a champion of Greek freedom who was

taken as a hostage by the Romans on the fall of Macedon, wrote of the expansion of Rome with profound philosophical insight and a conviction—rare tribute from a Greek—of the fitness of the Roman race to rule the world. One more feature of Hellenistic literature deserves notice: authors wrote no longer as the Athenian dramatists for the mass of their fellow-citizens, but for a public that was at once cosmopolitan and trained in the culture of the past.

It lies beyond our purpose to trace the history of Greek art. But this, at least, must be mentioned, that the architecture and sculpture of the age of Alexander reflect the character of contemporary literature. The Mausoleum, the tomb erected to king Mausolus by his widow at Halicarnassus in Caria, may be studied in the British Museum, together with the Nereid shrine from Xanthus in Lycia, as among the noblest monuments of fourth-century art. Perhaps the most interesting artistic development of the age is the rise of the art of portraiture. Alexander himself sat to the sculptor Lysippus and the greatest of Greek painters, Apelles. In architecture, the fourth century saw the invention of the florid Corinthian capital and the supersession of the austere Doric column by the richer Ionic. Under Alexander's successors, Pergamum in Asia Minor rose to be the chief centre of Hellenic sculpture, as Alexandria to be the chief centre of Hellenic learning. Greek art, like Greek culture generally, spread far over the Asiatic continent: modern researches assure us that it was from the Greeks who entered the Punjâb with Alexander that the Indians first learnt to build and carve in stone.

9. When Israel lost her national independence she sought a refuge in religion. The decline of the Hellenic city-state left the Greeks without that source of consola-

tion. We have seen that the popular faiths of Greece had ceased to influence the more thoughtful and earnest of the race; these, the aristocracy of culture, turned to philosophy for guidance and support. It is the philosophy of this age that has most profoundly influenced later generations of mankind. The greatest of Plato's pupils, Aristotle, had for three years been Alexander's tutor, perhaps the most impressive conjunction of genius in human history. Aristotle, like Alexander, stands at the parting of the ways. His philosophy is rooted in that of Plato; there is hardly one of his leading ideas of which the germ is not to be found in the Platonic dialogues. Even more than Plato, whose attitude to the life of his age was one of remorseless condemnation, he is a representative of Greek life as embodied in the city-state. That the knell of the free city had sounded at Chaeronea Aristotle seems scarcely to be aware. It is his strong grasp of the actual in nature and human life, and his interest in the social and physical phenomena of the Hellenic world, that make his philosophy such an illuminating commentary on Greek culture. Plato saw deeper into the springs of human action, but Aristotle was the more typical Hellene. His political ideal was the Hellenic city-state reformed rather than revolutionised; his ideal for the individual was the life of reason informing as a principle of proportion and measure the rich and varied field of citizen duty as presented in the life of the Greek state. It is this sense of the value of attained fact, of the necessity of realising the ideal form amid the material of actual conditions in the Greece of the age, that distinguishes Aristotle from Plato. Like Plato, he held the contemplative life to be the highest; like Plato, he held that to be most real which is most knowable—the eternal truths which are

objects not of sense but of thought. But these eternal forms were not in his view denizens of a world remote from that of actual experience; they were the governing principles of the world in which we live.

10. Aristotle was not merely a disciple of Plato, but the spokesman of a new age in the history of thought. The field of knowledge, surveyed by previous philosophers, had been enriched through the campaigns of Alexander; vast collections of new material, gathered by scientists in the course of the expeditions, lay at Aristotle's disposal. His achievement was twofold: to determine the method of inquiry and to map out the ground into provinces of knowledge. Aristotle was the real founder of logic; building always on Plato's foundations, he systematised the science of method in its detail. Philosophy and science alike are largely an affair of method. They differ from popular thinking not so much in that they are busied with different objects as in that they handle the same objects in a different way. The plants and animals which form the subject matter of botany and zoology had already been grouped and distinguished and their manner of growth known roughly and in a popular way before these sciences arose; the task of science was to correct and systematise these popular classifications and to determine precisely the laws of growth. Secondly, Aristotle carried out the task of defining the various provinces of human experience as the several domains of the different sciences, and of determining both the natural features of each branch and its appropriate method. Lastly, he endeavoured to grasp the manifold provinces of experience in their mutual affinities and distinctions as parts of a single world. No philosopher has so justly balanced the proportion of whole and part in knowledge or has kept

such a firm hold on the root distinctions of things while comprehending them in a single system. It is his genius in systematisation combined with the universal range of his knowledge, his appreciation of the variety of ruling principles in the world, and his insistence on philosophic method, that justify Dante in calling him "The Master of those who know."[1] The philosophy of succeeding ages moved on the lines and within the area marked out by Aristotle. In the later Middle Age he was accepted as a supreme authority in all matters of human knowledge. When the revival of learning proclaimed the supersession of authority by free inquiry, it abjured the Aristotle of the mediaeval schoolmen, but followed, though unwittingly, the paths that Aristotle had traced out. As the great organiser of knowledge, he holds in things of the mind a place analogous to the Roman Empire in the field of practical government.

11. The Hellenistic age was one of organisation and specialism; knowledge was concentrated in academic centres, in schools and libraries. Plato founded his "Academy" at Athens, and Aristotle followed his example: these two colleges, and others founded later, continued to teach on the lines of their founders' doctrines till the fall of Paganism. Thus Athens became the centre of philosophy and furnished the great university of the Græco-Roman world. At the end the Greek spirit died of inanition in learned academies; it was in learned academies that it was to rise again in the Italy of the Renaissance. The Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies were soon found too abstruse for the cultured layman; of far wider influence were the two schools that dominate the thought of the next five centuries, the Stoic and the Epicurean. Zeno, the

[1] Inferno, iv. 131.

founder of the Stoics, came from Cilicia; in his teaching we first see the Oriental spirit—its hatred of sin and insistence on righteousness—in the garb of Hellenic thought. Both Zeno and Epicurus belong to the generation immediately succeeding Aristotle and Alexander. The influence of the time is seen in the aim common to both schools, which is ethical rather than metaphysical, to give support to the individual in his struggle through a stormy and evil world. Both alike portray the ideal life of the wise man, though in very different colours; the Stoic preached the law of virtue, of duty, of self-discipline, and self-sufficiency, which should free the individual from bondage to external circumstance; the Epicurean bade him seek pleasure and ensue it—not the pleasure of sense, but the cool "self-love" which is best attained in the life of philosophy and friendship—thus accommodating all circumstances to his ends and use. Stoicism, if somewhat uncompromising and rigorous, was a creed of singular moral elevation; Epicureanism, above all in its conception of friendship, was less exclusive, more democratic, more genial and humane. Yet that it too could inspire and exalt is shown by the magnificent poem of the Roman Epicurean, Lucretius (died 55 B.C.). But both alike were gospels of individual salvation, indifferent to the political society and the government of the world. That rested in the hands of the despot and his bureaucracy of officials; the task for the individual was to order the city of his own soul. Thus the Stoics proclaimed a cosmopolitan ideal, the city of humanity, of reason, of God: a conception which helped to shape both the doctrine of a universal law of Nature in Roman jurisprudence and the ideal of a heavenly citizenship in the Christian Church. In particular, St. Paul, a native of Cilicia, the home of Stoicism, and a citizen of the

world-state of Rome, found in the Stoic philosophy ideas capable of application to the universal society of Christ's people.

12. We have been led forward more than once to the age when Greek thought and culture flourished under the dominion of Rome. We shall return to this subject in a later chapter, to contrast the spirit of Hellenism as expressed in the moral teaching of the philosophic schools with the new spirit that arose with the spread of Christianity over the Roman world. Here we can insist only on one point. We have seen that Stoics and Epicureans alike endeavoured to fashion their philosophic doctrines into a message of practical guidance and consolation for the individual soul. Inasmuch as they were reasoned systems of philosophy, their appeal was necessarily limited to the cultured minority. They spoke home to the wise and prudent in the Græco-Roman world; but their message passed unheeded over the heads of the ignorant vulgar. In effect, from the very nature of the case, there was something exclusive and aristocratic in Hellenism, despite its permanent and universal value. The advent of Christianity, with its direct appeal to Greek and barbarian, bond and free, necessarily produced a clash and struggle of spiritual ideals. The nature of this conflict will be more evident when we have traced the course of Roman History. For it was within the field of the Roman Empire that it was fought out to its decisive issue. What we have here to remark is the striking fact that both ideals—the philosophic ideal of the Stoics and the religious gospel of Christianity—had their birth in the new world of Græco-Oriental civilisation opened out by Alexander and his Macedonian successors.

CHAPTER VI

THE RISE OF ROME

(*A*) **The Beginnings of the Roman City-State.**
§ 1. The origin of the city.
§ 2. Character of the Roman people.
§ 3. Character of Roman institutions.

(*B*) **The Growth of the Roman Republic (I) in Italy.**
§ 4. Internal struggles under the early Republic.
§ 5. The conquest of Italy.
§ 6. The Roman genius in war.
§ 7. The Roman genius in government.

(*C*) **The Growth of the Roman Republic (II) over the Mediterranean world.**
§ 8. Rome and Carthage: Conquest of the Western Mediterranean.
§ 9. Rome and the successors of Alexander: Conquest of the Eastern Mediterranean.
§ 10. The Roman power in the second century B.C.

(*D*) **Influence of Hellenism: the Roman State and Civilisation in the second century B.C.**
§ 11. Results of empire on the governing city.
§ 12. Influence of Greek culture on Roman literature.
§ 13. Characteristics of Roman poetry.
§ 14. Influence of Hellenism on Roman life and manners.
§ 15. The city-state and the problems of empire.

(*A*) **The Beginnings of the Roman City-State.** — 1. On a ring of hills by the banks of the Tiber, fourteen miles from its mouth, there stood in the early centuries of the first millennium groups of rude huts surrounded by a stockade, where shepherds took refuge with their flocks when raiders descended on them from the Sabine hills. As time went on several of these hamlets were united within a single ring-wall, and a town came into being. It occupied a favoured spot as the natural market

of the plain of Latium where the Tiber still was navigable, and there was little fear of the Etruscan pirates that harried the coast. The inhabitants of the plain had from early times been united for mutual defence from the highlanders in a league sanctioned by religious ceremonial, under the presidency of Alba; the city by the Tiber formed one of the members of the confederacy. The league was called the Latin League; the city on the Tiber was Rome.

We can trace in broad outline the beginnings of the growth of Rome. Before the first landmark in her history, the expulsion of the kings and establishment of the Republic at the close of the sixth century, she had risen already to the chief place among the Latin cities, had secured the Tiber bank to the port of Ostia at its mouth, and developed political institutions and an organised citizen-army. In the sixth century it appears that Rome became the capital of Etruscan princes who bore sway over Southern Etruria and the whole plain of Latium. The expulsion of the kings meant the overthrow of this foreign dominion; Rome became once more one of many Latin confederate towns. The Etruscan overlords had laid the foundations of the future splendour of Rome; fragments of their architecture —such as the stone wall ascribed to Servius Tullius— remain as witness of their skill; in the words of Montesquieu, "Already they had begun the building of the Eternal City."

2. How Rome rose from these humble origins through centuries of growth to the lordship of the Mediterranean world is the most memorable episode in human history. "Rome was not built in a day." Her Empire was no brilliant creation of individual genius, but the slow and measured outcome of racial energy. It is because of this

that it endured; its foundations were so surely laid in the character of the Roman people. The record of their early history is for the most part legendary—we know few certain details till after the burning of the city by the Gauls (390 B.C)—but the national character is clearly reflected in the legends that won belief. They were a race of iron-hearted warriors; it was the Roman people—not the fictitious Romulus and Remus—that were true nurslings of the she-wolf and were sprung of the lineage of Mars. Take one legend out of many—the tale how the three Horatii championed Rome in combat against three Curiatii of Alba. Two of the former were slain; the unwounded Horatius held the field alone against his three antagonists. Feigning flight, he vanquished them singly, crippled as they were by wounds. As he returned to Rome bearing the spoils, his sister, betrothed to one of the slain Curiatii, broke out in lamentation; her brother slew her on the spot. He was condemned for murder, but acquitted of guilt by the people in that he had wrought justice on one who had mourned the enemies of Rome. Thus, as after-ages believed, arose the time-honoured right of appeal on a capital charge by a Roman citizen to the people. Let us mark the significance of the story. It is profoundly true—and Montesquieu observed the fact—that the fortune of Rome throughout her history brought her enemies upon her one by one. Her wars again and again open with disaster; they always close in victory. Above all, the strength of Roman character lay in the absolute subjection of personal interests to civic loyalty. From the earliest days, the Roman lived and died for his country. There were ingrained in his nature the instinct of subordination, and the habit of reverence for authority and law. As we read of the making of the Roman Empire, we find little

trace of individual distinction, and no personality of striking genius, as in the history of the Greeks. To be a typical Roman citizen and soldier, to "do at Rome as Rome does," was the path of virtue (*virtus*) and fame; no Roman was indispensable, for others of the same stamp were ready to step into his place; Rome endured, impregnable in the solidarity of her citizens.

3. Rome was a city-state, and her early institutions—king, council, assembly of the people—were those familiar in other branches of the Indo-European Stock. What is characteristic is the respect paid to authority. The state was the family writ large. Plato in his *Republic* proposed to abolish the private household, because it divided the citizens' loyalty with the state. At Rome the family was at once the reflection and the training-ground of national patriotism. The same word "piety" denoted the reverent devotion of son to parent, of citizen to magistrate, of man to the gods. In the Roman family we note first the absolute dominion of the father (*paterfamilias*) over the lives and property of wife, child and slave; and secondly, the customary restriction of that prerogative by the advice of adult male members of the house. The Roman matron enjoyed a position of dignity denied to the women of Athens; a position all the firmer because it rested on inviolable custom. In the state the supreme magistrate possessed absolute power. This "command" (*imperium*) of the executive magistrate is throughout Roman history the pivot of all constitutional development. But here again custom prescribed a limit to the exercise of absolutism. The senate, in theory a consultative body, meeting only at the magistrate's summons to discuss what the magistrate willed, became in practice an august council, whose opinion could be ignored only by an act of virtual revolution. Further, in

any situation that necessitated a departure from the established law of the state, such as declaration of war, adoption into a family, or the election of a successor to the throne, the assent of the sovereign people had to be obtained. It is interesting to remark the difference and the analogy between the constitutional life of Rome and that of England. Both present the same broad features of slow development, elasticity in practical application, and restriction of theoretical power by use and custom. Both endured for centuries with unbroken continuity, thanks to their plastic adaptability to changing conditions. Both present a tissue of illogical contrivances, quaint fictions and effete survivals, the easy price paid for institutions that are not the work of a single lawgiver, but the expression of racial experience. In the very heart of government under the Republic we find the absolute and indivisible "imperium" possessed jointly by two consuls as equal and supreme magistrates. Inconceivable as such a system might appear on paper, it worked in practice; for it was the outgrowth of experience and was founded on the bedrock of fact. But there is this great difference, that whereas the centre of political gravity in England lies in Parliament, that of Rome lay not in the legislature but in the executive. "The great contests for freedom in this country," said Edmund Burke, "were from the earliest times chiefly upon the question of taxing. Most of the contests in the ancient commonwealths turned primarily on the right of election of magistrates or on the balance of the several orders of the state. The question of money was not with them so immediate."[1] With England political history is full of issues such as the right of the Crown to levy shipmoney, of Parliament to tax America, the House of Lords to reject the Budget

[1] Speech on Conciliation with America.

In early Rome the question of taxation was non-existent. There the struggles for liberty had for their goal the limitation of the "imperium" of the chief magistrates.

(*B*) **The Growth of the Roman Republic (I) in Italy.**—4. The opening of the fifth century saw Rome a republic. Not that the governing principles of the early constitution had been changed: the *imperium*, hitherto vested in the king for life, was now conferred on two equal and supreme magistrates (consuls) elected annually by the people. Provision was made for the temporary restoration of the single magistracy in time of crisis in the person of a dictator. During the two following centuries (510–287 B.C.) the small Republic was beset by foes without and torn inwardly by political conflicts. Chief among the latter was the long struggle of the plebeian citizens for equality of social, political and religious rights with the patricians, which closed in favour of the former in the middle of the fourth century. This antagonism may well have arisen out of racial difference, like that of Norman nobility and Saxon commons in English history. Early landmarks in the struggle were the establishment of plebeian officers (tribunes) for protection against the oppression of patrician magistrates, and the organisation of the democratic assembly of the tribes. The tribunes possessed an absolute right of veto upon the actions of the magistrates and senate, a curious contrast to the mode in which power was adjusted in England between Lords and Commons. The excessive power of the magistracy over the persons of individual citizens was further limited by the publication in the middle of the fifth century of the laws of the Twelve Tables. The gradual extension of the number of magistrates as the functions of the government grew more numerous and complex involved a customary partition of spheres of authority, and the mutual check of

colleagues one upon another. Again, we read of the struggles of the poorer citizens for allotments on the conquered lands of enemies, and for relief from the pressure of debt. The Roman in early times was at once citizen, soldier and farmer; the military and political strength of the state was rooted in the soil, and the agrarian problem is of the first importance throughout Roman history. Early in the third century (287) the Hortensian law placed the power of legislation unchecked in the hands of the assembly of the tribes; while the admission of plebeians to all offices had deprived the distinction of patrician and plebeian of any practical significance. This, however, meant little more than the replacement of a hereditary patrician aristocracy by a new nobility, whose power rested on tenure of magisterial office.

5. The same period (510–270) saw the rise of Rome to be mistress of Italy. For a century and a half after the expulsion of the Etruscan kings she fought uninterruptedly with her neighbours; for fifty years her very existence as an independent state was almost annually at stake. It was this urgent pressure of enemies without that gave leverage to the plebeians in their internal conflicts with the patricians. After 450 Rome forged ahead: by 350 she was supreme over Southern Etruria and the plain of Latium. The old Latin League ceased to exist, save in religious ceremonial. The conquest of Latium brought her into relations with the Greek cities on the Campanian coast. Thus early in her history Rome stood forth as the champion of order and of Hellenic civilisation; it was the task of defending the unwarlike Greeks that brought her into conflict with the powerful hill tribes of central Italy. There followed the long and arduous struggle with the Samnites (343–290), which left Rome the sole power northwards to the valley of the

Po, and eastwards to the Adriatic. In the third century Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, the first captain of his age, brought his highland warriors and elephants across the sea to defend the Greeks of Tarentum against the southward advance of Rome. A professional soldier of the school of Alexander, he nourished wild dreams of achieving in the West like triumphs with those of Alexander in the East; but he lacked Alexander's genius in statesmanship, and Rome, a free and consolidated state, was an enemy of a quality far different from Persia. On Pyrrhus' failure the Greeks of the south fell an easy prey to the Roman legions, and Rome ruled unchallenged from the plain of Lombardy to the Straits of Messina.

6. The principles of Rome in war and government are permanent throughout her history; and we can trace in the record of these early struggles the lines on which she afterwards ruled the world. We remark first the efficiency of her military organisation. The legion, observed one of the Latin writers,[1] was the inspiration of a god. It combined the weight of the Macedonian phalanx with superior mobility, as was proved in the war with Pyrrhus. In armament and methods of warfare the Romans displayed an astonishing power of learning from their enemies; every defeat was the signal for military reforms which enabled them to emerge from war triumphant. Thus they borrowed the heavy javelin from the Samnites, as later they learnt the construction of large warships from the Carthaginians, and at the close of the second Punic war defeated Hannibal with the cavalry which had been the instrument of his early victories. The Romans were rarely victorious at the outset of their wars; like the English, they "muddled through," a slang phrase which signifies the triumph of racial persistence

[1] Vegetius.

and the power of using defeat as a means of victory. They, too, were modest as to the reason of their successes; they ascribed them to the "Fortune of the Roman people." What is most impressive is their patriotic self-confidence; Rome never made peace while a single enemy remained on Roman soil. It is an error to regard the Romans as an aggressive people, bent on subduing first Italy, then the world. It is more true to say that their wars came on them inevitably in the order of things. They were at each stage in their history faced with the alternative, to go forward or to go back. Rome never went back. Beset as she was by turbulent neighbours, the task of policing her own territory involved her in continual war, and war in the long run meant extension of empire. To allay the conflagration on her borders she was compelled to step in with force of arms; and intervention involved eventual occupation. There was cynicism in Roman diplomacy, and self-interest was the standing maxim of her policy; but she never thirsted for conquest, and the justification of her Empire from first to last lay in the identification by Rome of self-interest with the cause of law, order and civilisation.

7. The genius of Rome was yet more remarkable in administration than in war. At each stage of her expansion in Italy she riveted her conquests with iron bands of military roads and military colonies. These were the two instruments by which the city-state secured her sovereignty over distant subjects. The Roman colony was not like that of the Greeks, an independent city-state, but a settlement of Roman farmer-soldiers with full or partial citizen rights in the midst of conquered enemies. So long as the colonies remained faithful, the Roman legions might be beaten in the field, but the Roman state stood firm. In relation to the conquered, the Roman maxim

was "Divide et impera" (Divide and rule). No bond of association—in early days not even the rights of trade or intermarriage—was tolerated among her different subject communities. She maintained this cardinal principle unimpaired throughout her long history of empire. The same distrust of subordinate associations which led her to abolish the Latin League was the political ground of persecution by the early emperors of the Christian Church. On the other hand, all alike were bound by links of varied stringency with Rome. To some of the Italians she gave full citizenship, so long at least as her citizen body needed recruits, to others partial citizenship, to others a less share of privilege, to all a certain measure of local self-government, always as the occasion and Rome's welfare directed; thus welding together the peoples of Italy in indissoluble solidarity under the unchallenged sovereignty of Rome.

(*C*) **The Growth of the Roman Republic (II) over the Mediterranean World.**—8. The story is told how Pyrrhus, when he left Italy after his failure to save the Greek cities in the south of the peninsula, exclaimed, "What a battlefield we are leaving for the Romans and Carthaginians!" For centuries the Sicilian Greeks had struggled within Phoenician Carthage for the island; only the narrow straits now parted Sicily from Rome. Carthage sailed the western seas unchallenged; but Rome had begun already to police with her fleet the coasts of Italy. The conflict, the most terrible in ancient history, opened in 264; it lasted, save for a twenty years' break for the combatants to recover strength (241–219), till the crowning victory of Scipio over Hannibal at Zama in 202. It lies beyond our scope to dwell on its history. The first Punic (Phoenician) war (264–241) gave Rome Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica, and the sea-power in the western

Mediterranean. In the interval that followed she subdued the Gauls between the northern Apennines and the Alps. The second war (219–201), ever memorable for the invasion of Italy by the great Hannibal, closed with the conquest of Spain and the reduction of Carthage to the position of a vassal state of Rome. Never in her long history was the heroic patriotism of the Roman people more conspicuous than in the dark hours when the relics of her shattered legions hung desperately round the invader. When the consul Varro drew near the city after the terrible disaster of Cannae (216 B.C.), the senate —his political foes—went forth to meet him with their thanks that he had not despaired of the Republic. A few years later, when Hannibal approached the gates of Rome, the land on which his camp was pitched was sold in the city at its full market price in time of peace. The moral of the historic conflict is clear as day. A commercial oligarchy—Carthage has been called the London of antiquity—jealous of its greatest citizens and dependent on mercenary soldiers, could not prevail in arms against a free republic Nor could the genius of the greatest of military leaders avail to undermine the solid fabric of the Roman colonies in Italy. The issue once determined, Rome hunted her foe to death with remorseless severity. She procured first the exile, then the death of Hannibal, the one individual whom she deigned to fear. Finally, when Carthage arose from her death agony in a supreme effort to regain her freedom, after an heroic resistance she was levelled with the ground.

9. In vain had Hannibal striven to combine the Greek powers of the East with Carthage against Rome; the fortune of the city here again brought her enemies upon her one by one. Burdened with their conquests in the West—the administration of Spain alone was a heavy

tax on their energies—the Romans were reluctant to embark on new enterprises in the eastern Mediterranean; but Macedonian soldiers had fought under Hannibal at Zama (202), and a few years later the Seleucid king of Asia (Antiochus the Great) attacked her allies in Greece and Egypt. It was no wanton career of conquest on which she embarked. Fifty years from the close of the second Punic war witnessed the downfall, after two successive wars (200–194; 171–167), of Macedon, the crushing defeat in a single battle (Magnesia in 190) of the unwieldy power of Asia, and the recognition of Rome as the sovereign state in and around the eastern Mediterranean. Montesquieu justly observes that "after the fall of the Carthaginians Rome fought only little wars and won great victories, whereas before she had won small victories and fought great wars." In this brilliant half-century of eastern expansion we note three salient facts. First, Rome appears at every point as the power that makes for law and order; as the one effective police of the sorely troubled Hellenic world. Hence she is allied everywhere with the leading commercial states, Egypt, Rhodes and Pergamum. Secondly, she stands forth conspicuously as the champion of Hellenism. We shall speak later of the pervasive influence of Greek culture in this age on the character and life of Rome. It is marked by a veritable idealism among the more cultured Romans for Greek ideas and Greek liberty. After the Macedonian war with which the second century opened, the Roman victor Flamininus proclaimed to the Greeks assembled at the Isthmus of Corinth that they were henceforth free. A less enthusiastic champion might have foreseen the issue: for half a century anarchy raged over the peninsula, till Rome was driven to annexation. Thirdly, the reluctance of the Roman senate to enlarge

the bounds of empire is most evident throughout this epoch. Their policy in Macedon serves as an illustration. After their first victory they confirm the Macedonian sovereign as a dependent upon Rome; when his successor provokes a second war he is deposed, and a divided Macedonia is handed over to four local authorities; only when this experiment fails is the country constituted a Roman province (146). We may compare the successive expedients devised by the British government in India to postpone time after time the annexation of the Punjáb.

10. Thus by the middle of the second century Rome bore undisputed sway over the Mediterranean world. In the west she ruled directly the provinces of Sicily Sardinia and Corsica, Gaul south of the Alps, Hither and Farther Spain, and Africa. The coast lands between the Alps and Pyrenees were shortly afterwards incorporated as the province of Narbonese Gaul, the "Provence" of a later age. In the east her provinces were Macedonia with Achaia or Greece, and Asia—*i. e.* the western region of Asia Minor, bequeathed to the Roman state in 133 by the last Greek prince of Pergamum. Beyond the frontiers of these provinces, alike in West and East, were a ring of independent principalities, such as Numidia in Africa, Egypt, Syria, the relic of the Seleucid monarchy, and innumerable minor states, ruled internally by their own governments, but controlled in respect of all foreign relations by Rome. The succeeding century saw the completion of the structure in internal administration, in the formation of new provinces and in the determination of the permanent frontiers of the Empire. But in its broad essentials Roman rule already at the close of the second century had been established over the Mediterranean area. Therewith the function of Rome in history was marked out. That function was twofold, dependent

on the difference of conditions confronting her in West and East. In the West she had to implant law and civilisation among barbaric or semi-barbaric peoples; the history of her rule in Spain is witness to the rapid success of her achievement. In the East she found a civilisation of long standing and far superior to her own; her task, within the bounds of Alexander's conquests, was to preserve from anarchy and ruin the fabric of Hellenic culture that past ages had built up, and to carry on the task of Alexander and his successors by enabling that culture to permeate and leaven the peoples of the Nearer and Middle East. At the same time Rome herself assimilated Hellenism and inaugurated a Graeco-Roman epoch of civilisation.

(*D*) **Influence of Hellenism: the Roman State and Civilisation in the Second Century** B.C.—11. It remains to indicate the bearing of this rapid expansion of empire on the life of the Roman state. First, as regards the central government. During the crisis of the Punic wars the senate had become supreme alike over magistrates and people. Recruited from magistrates and ex-magistrates, it comprised the tried soldiers and statesmen at a time when the consuls and citizens were almost constantly engaged in active military service. Above all, it showed itself capable and worthy of its power; the senate of the third century was, as Pyrrhus' envoy had reported, a true council of kings. The close of the Punic wars saw the senate in control of foreign affairs, provincial organisation, state finance, and all essentials of public policy. In the second century the senate remained the dominant power in the state, though it suffered a rapid change for the worse in two directions. Its ranks and those of the higher magistracy became the monopoly of an exclusive ring of noble, *i. e.*

office-holding, families; and the spread of wealth and luxury sapped the morals of the governing class. The next century (from 134) witnessed a revival of party struggles between the senate and the democracy carried on with an intensity hitherto unknown in Roman history. Secondly, the line between Roman citizens and the non-citizen population of Italy became in this age more and more rigid. Those Italian communities who had joined Hannibal were reduced to a position of comparative serfdom. Even the loyal cities found that they were left with the burdens of citizens without their rights. When we consider that the Italians were akin in stock to Rome, that in energy and character they were at least the equals of their masters, and that they were compelled increasingly to bear the brunt of military service, we can appreciate the ruinous issues that were bound to flow from the narrow and despotic policy of the Roman government in Italy. Thirdly, the great wars carried with them a profound social and economic revolution in Roman manners. In earlier times Rome was comparatively poor and a large measure of equality prevailed among her citizens. Now, almost suddenly, she found herself rich, the centre of Mediterranean commerce, with the markets of West and East at the feet of her merchants and financiers. The results were obvious: the rise of a plutocracy whose wealth gave them political influence at Rome and in the provinces, the spread of luxury among the aristocracy which the government vainly strove to check, financial speculation, the growth of huge landed estates, the decay of the yeoman farmer, and the wholesale importation of slave labour. The simplicity of Roman manners rapidly yielded to these changed conditions of daily life; indolence, corruption, and incapacity spread among her governing classes;

above all, the subtle influence of Hellenic culture transformed for good and for evil the ideals and standards of Roman conduct.

12. It was in Campania in the fourth century that Rome was first brought into intimate relationship with Greek civilisation. The first fruits of this intimacy are seen a century later in the impulse given by Greece to Latin literature. The native poetry of Rome—hymns, ballads, rustic comedy—was rude in form and subject-matter; poets were held in low esteem,—there is no basis for Macaulay's view that the early political struggles of the city inspired a rich ballad literature. Roman poetry had its beginnings in translations and imitations of Greek classics, and save at the very beginning of its history employed the metrical forms created by the Greeks—especially the epic hexameter. But it would be a grave error to suppose that the Roman poets, in following Greek models, were slavish imitators of their masters. From the first they infused into their works the spirit of Rome. Ennius, who was a contemporary of the second Punic war, and took that historic conflict for the theme of his epic, gave expression to the qualities of gravity and virile energy, of imperial pride and political sagacity, that were distinctive marks of Roman character. The same is true of the Latin Comedy of Manners in the second century; Greek models were adapted to reflect the interests and social life of Rome. One peculiar style of poetry was native to Roman literature, the "satire" or medley, first composed by Lucilius in the middle of the second century, expressing in hexameter verse scenes of social life, literary and political criticism, autobiography and personal adventure, and the intercourse of friends. Roman writers displayed a unique felicity and charm in

this vein of poetry; as a modern critic has said, "Not Horace only, nor all the satirists after Horace, but Montaigne and Pepys also, belong to the school of Lucilius." Roman prose literature had its birth in the same epoch: the practical genius of the race led them early to break ground in the fields of forensic oratory and history.

13. We can trace already in this early poetry of Rome the peculiar characteristics that are the source of the charm and the nobility of Latin literature. There is first the sense of the greatness of Rome, her genius for law and order, her imperial destiny. Secondly, in Roman poetry we find a reflexion of personal relationships and a rare warmth of personal friendship, that draw the reader into intimacy with the poet and his daily life. Thirdly, there is a true understanding and love of Nature. The Greek poets had written of Nature in imperishable verse; but with all their sense of her beauty and grandeur, she remained to them an alien power, a spectacle indeed to arouse wonder, but one in which they never felt themselves at home. Nature to the Greeks was always something outside themselves, something to be known about or conquered, not something to be loved. The Roman poets loved Nature as akin to themselves. The Greek lived in and for the city: if he travelled abroad it was to see the cities of men; his estates were a source of revenue, not a chosen retreat. The Roman gladly fled the city for the country; he was the first to appreciate the worth of a country house and to create a resort for time of leisure by the sea. So Catullus quitted Rome for his villa on the Lake of Garda, Horace, for his Sabine farm, Virgil, for the Bay of Naples. It was the same with the business man and lawyer when, as in Horace's famous simile, he shook off affairs and retired to the "fields

of Venafrum or Lacedaemonian Tarentum." The Roman first of races knew and expressed in verse a sense of intimate delight in Nature akin to that of Chaucer or of Wordsworth.

14. We observed above that the spread of Hellenism effected a gradual transformation of Roman life and manners. Society in Rome became at once more luxurious and more refined. The Roman aristocracy were learning from the Greeks the value of literature and the fine arts. The masterpieces of Greek sculpture were brought to Rome to adorn the houses of victorious generals. There is a saying of George Meredith to the effect that the one abstract idea that the military mind is able to grasp is that of booty, and doubtless at the outset the rude thirst for plunder had much to do with this spoliation of Greece. But when once the works of art were visible in Rome, they began to exercise a silent and subtle influence on the formation of public taste. When once this taste had been developed, the Romans became interested not merely to preserve the classic creations of the past, but also to encourage such new creations in art and literature as the Greek genius was still able to produce. Creative art implies a public, and the public was now furnished by Rome. But Romans never became artists; their patronage dealt Greek art its final blow. Greek philosophy, however, began to take root in Rome in the second century. The Romans had little capacity or interest for abstract thinking, and long resisted its intrusion into their civilisation. But we have seen that the philosophy of this age centred round practical problems, and that the Stoics and Epicureans alike placed ethics in the forefront of their systems. Their doctrines spread to Rome, with the inevitable result that the old Roman standards of

piety and virtue were slowly modified and eventually undermined. Signs of sceptical thought are already present in the poems of Ennius. The elder statesmen of the second century, such as Cato the censor, were suspicious of Greek influence; in the middle of the century a decree was passed by the senate that all philosophers should be expelled the city. But resistance to ideas was as impracticable as resistance to wealth and luxury; slowly but surely, for good and for evil, the spirit of Greece, in Horace's phrase, "took captive her rude conqueror."

15. Thus a century from the time of the first war with Carthage saw far-reaching changes in the position and life of Rome. The new conditions gave rise to a new problem. Could a city-state with republican institutions govern an empire extending over the Mediterranean world? We have seen that selfishness, indolence and corruption had begun to wreak havoc in the Roman aristocracy; their exclusive self-interest had alienated the Italians; could such rulers maintain a vast provincial empire? The fact was that the senatorial nobility and the democratic proletariate were alike devoid of the needed foresight and imagination. There was a further danger. The armies of the state were more and more concentrated on the frontiers under provincial governors, beyond the range of direct control by the senate at Rome. They were composed no longer of farmer-citizens, called from the fields for a few months' service in the year, to fight for hearth and home; military service had become the profession of a lifetime, and the ties that bound the army to the civil government were relaxed. The Roman soldier took the oath of allegiance (*sacramentum*) to his general and not to the state. How long could the successful general in command of a province

preserve the self-restraint and civic loyalty that were a second nature to the early Roman? Here lay the inevitable danger for the age that was to follow. Moreover the spirit of Hellenism was abroad in Rome, and it was a spirit that made for individualism and self-aggrandisement. The provincial governor, with unlimited power over his troops and the resources of his province, would not be content always to render obedience to a selfish and corrupt government; a government, moreover, unsupported by arms. It was in the conjunction of these causes, the natural inability of a city to rule an empire, the demoralisation alike of senate and democracy, and, above all, the newly-created power of the proconsul in the provinces, that in the century following the epoch of expansion led to the fall of the Roman Republic and the establishment of the Roman Empire.

CHAPTER VII

THE ROMAN EMPIRE

(*A*) **The Establishment of the Empire.**
§ 1. The fall of the Roman Republic.
§ 2. The foundation of the Empire by Julius Caesar.
§ 3. The problem of frontier defence.
§ 4. Historical significance of Caesar's murder.
§ 5. The organisation of the Empire by Augustus.
§ 6. The provinces and delimitation of frontiers.
§ 7. Illustration from the history of Spain.

(*B*) **Graeco-Roman Civilisation, 100 B.C.–A.D. 100.**
§ 8. Roman literature: the age of Cicero.
§ 9. Roman literature: the Augustan age—Virgil's *Aeneid*.
§ 10. Roman literature: the post-Augustan age.
§ 11. Greek literature under the early Empire—Plutarch.

(*C*) **The Roman Empire and the Birth of Christ.**
§ 12. Change in ideals of life.
§ 13. The new spirit in Virgil's poetry.
§ 14. The birth of Christ.
§ 15. Prosperity of the Roman world under the Empire.

(*A*) **The Establishment of the Empire.**—1. The century that preceded the birth of Christ saw the fall of the Roman Republic and the institution of the Roman Empire. The period is one of extraordinary interest, both for the sake of the events and personalities and because we have so full a knowledge of its history. If we are to fix its chronological limits, we may say that it opens with the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus in 133 B.C., and closes with the definitive establishment of the Empire by Augustus in 27 B.C. But, as we remarked in the last chapter, the seeds of the revolution were planted in the changed condition of the Roman state when it became sovereign of a great Mediterranean Empire. A single

city-state could not, as a city-state, rule the world. We may summarise briefly the successive phases of the crisis as follows—

(i) The first step in the direction of revolution was the attack upon the governing aristocracy by the two brothers Tiberius (133 B.C.) and Gaius Gracchus (123–122 B.C.) as champions of the democratic party (*i.e.* the city proletariate of Rome). They developed the powers latent in the tribunate as a weapon against both magistrates and senate. Gaius Gracchus also took advantage of the rivalry of the capitalists and the senate to secure the support of the former. The senate retaliated by open violence, and party struggles were brought to the verge of civil war.

(ii) Early in the first century B.C. the power of the sword was enlisted both on the side of the senate and on that of democratic revolution. When Gaius Gracchus had proposed in the spirit of true statesmanship to enfranchise the Italians, he had been deserted by the city democracy. In 90 and 89 the Italians won the franchise by force of arms. The war between Rome and the Italians passed without a break into a civil war (89, 88 B.C.) between two rival Roman generals—Marius, the champion of the democratic party, and Sulla, the champion of the senate. Before the close of the second century Gaius Marius had remodelled the army. The attack of northern barbarians on the frontier provinces had brought home the need of a professional army led by professional commanders. The changes introduced into the military system by Marius saved Rome from the barbarians (102, 101 B.C.), but hastened the transformation of civil struggles into military revolution. Henceforward the successful general is the arbiter of internal politics. Sulla's triumph made him master of

the state; as dictator he restored the senate to almost uncontrolled supremacy (81 B.C.). The restoration was itself a revolution, in that it had been effected by force of arms: Sulla reigned as an absolute sovereign; and though he acted in the interest of the old order and resigned his despotism when his work was done, it was inevitable that others would follow where he had shown the way and would use military power for less unselfish ends.

(iii) On Sulla's death (78 B.C.) the senate rapidly showed its incapacity to maintain the position he had secured for it. The wars against King Mithradates in Asia Minor (88–64 B.C.) brought a new general to the front in the person of Pompey, who in 67 and 66 was entrusted in the East with extraordinary proconsular powers that foreshadow the later autocracy of the emperors. By virtue of these powers Pompey reorganised the East and returned to Rome in 61 with commanding influence in Roman politics.

(iv) The history of the next twelve years (61–48 B.C.) centres round two leading personalities, each of whom owed his position to the support of the legions. On the one hand Pompey, athirst for power yet too timid to strike for the prize within his grasp, drifted into the rôle of champion of the senate and the Republic. On the other hand Caesar, endowed with incomparable genius both for war and statecraft, built up an invincible military strength during his command in Gaul (58–49). His conquest of Gaul and extension of Roman frontiers to the Rhine staved off for centuries the tide of barbarian invasion and at the same time forged the weapon with which he dealt the deathblow to the Republic. In this, as in other episodes in his career, he displayed to a remarkable degree the capacity that distinguishes so many of the

greatest men in history, of blending the path of personal ambition with that of vital national interests.

(v) The final act in the struggle opens when, in the spring of 49, Caesar at the head of his army crossed the river Rubicon that formed the boundary between his military command and Italy. The next year (48) saw Pompey crushed at Pharsalia. The Republicans held out in the West for three years longer: in 46 Cato, the idealist of the party, fell on his sword at Utica in Africa, and the crowning victory of Munda in Spain in 45 left Caesar unchallenged sovereign of the Roman world.

2. Caesar's supreme position in the state was furnished with a show of legal sanction by the gradual concentration in his person of a number of republican offices, notably the consulship, tribunate and dictatorship. As four centuries and a half before monarchy had been transformed into republic by the dual limitation of collegiality (two consular colleagues in place of one king) and of time (election for one year), so now the abolition of these restrictions—Caesar became dictator and tribune for life—carried with it the change from republic to monarchy. Thus a real revolution was effected without an absolute suppression of old constitutional forms. No incidents in Roman history so well illustrate at once the continuity and the adaptability of Roman institutions. In virtue of these and other powers Caesar appointed magistrates and provincial governors, increased the magistracy in numbers, and controlled all questions of war and peace, foreign affairs, and imperial organisation. Popular election became a mere form. The senate was recruited in numbers, and many of the senators were provincials, for Caesar inaugurated the imperial policy of levelling up the provincials to equality with Romans,

and it became an instrument for registering Caesar's edicts. A large body of legislation was enacted under his direction, including economic and agrarian reforms, the regulation of municipal government in Italy, the extension of Roman citizenship—Gades (Cadiz) in Spain was the first city in the provinces to be admitted to the franchise—and taxation. Great public works were initiated in Italy and the provinces; colonies were founded, *e. g.* on the site of Carthage; Caesar's reformed calendar is, with slight modifications, that still in acceptance by the civilised world. These changes were effected by Caesar in the brief intervals between his later campaigns. He spent but eighteen months in Rome in the last five years of his life, and his achievements represent merely the initial stages of a comprehensive scheme of imperial government. Nevertheless they determined the broad lines on which the Roman world was governed for the succeeding centuries; the personal rule of the monarch through his personally appointed staff of officers, extension of privilege and citizenship throughout the Empire, maintenance of internal peace and equal law, delimitation of the frontiers and their defence against non-civilised invaders. In all these respects Augustus built on the foundations laid so swiftly, yet with so sure an insight, by Julius Caesar.

3. The last-mentioned problem, that of frontier defence, had been too much neglected during the epoch of the civil wars. We have spoken of the grave danger to which Italy was exposed towards the end of the second century B.C., through the westward movement of barbarian hordes from their home in north and east Europe across the Rhine and the Danube. Then Marius with his reformed army had saved Rome: half a century later Caesar's conquests in Gaul laid the foundations of a secure and permanent

northern frontier. In Africa, Cyrene (74 B.C.) and Numidia (46 B.C.) had been added to the roll of provinces. The pressing danger lay in the East. Pompey (67–62 B.C.) had organised the Roman dominions and dependencies in the East at the close of the war with Mithradates; to the old province of Asia there were added five new provinces—Cilicia, Bithynia, Syria, Crete, and Cyprus.[1] The Seleucid dynasty ceased to be; their western possessions had fallen to Rome, while in the Euphrates valley the Parthian Empire menaced the Roman province of Syria. It was Parthia that now replaced the successors of Alexander as the antagonist of Rome. In 54 B.C. the Parthians annihilated a Roman army at Carrhae; honour and safety alike demanded a war that had been delayed too long. Caesar lost no time in grappling with the issue; in the spring of 44 the legions awaited their commander; on the Ides of March (March 15), the eve of his departure from Rome, he was attacked by conspirators in the senate house and perished at the foot of Pompey's statue.

4. The murder of Caesar has been truly described as the greatest blunder in history, for it accomplished nothing save the removal from the scene of the greatest Roman; after thirteen years of civil war, the death agony of the Republic, the Empire was reconstituted by his adopted heir. In fact, the circumstances of the problem did not admit of any alternative solution. A republican-city state could not rule the civilised world. In the view of after-ages, bred in the rich traditions of the Roman Empire, for whom that Empire was sacred, not only as the author of law and civilisation, but as the divinely predestined instrument for the spread of the Christian faith, the deed appeared as the blackest

[1] Cyprus was added in 58 B.C.

of crimes. In the lowest depths of Dante's Inferno were placed the three arch-malefactors of history, Judas Iscariot, the traitor to the founder of the Catholic Church, Brutus and Cassius, the traitors to the founder of the Catholic Empire. Crime it was not, but blunder: for, like the passionate resistance of Demosthenes to Philip of Macedon, it was the outcome of a legitimate idealism. It has been observed already in these pages how profound was the value in Greek and Roman civilisation of the republican city-state, with its atmosphere of free discussion and civic equality. Small wonder if the descendants of the men who under the aegis of the city-state had fashioned the Roman Empire, with its majestic structure of law and government, were jealous of the institutions that had made Rome and Romans great. No ties of personal gratitude, no experience of Caesar's clemency or admiration for his genius could destroy that passionate attachment for the Republic to which he had dealt the death-blow. We cannot expect the last republicans of Rome to have understood, what Cicero failed to understand, that the doom of the city-state was sealed. They avenged the blow by means that the moral code of Greek and Roman alike sanctioned as honourable when employed against the despot, and slew Caesar, not for personal vengeance or ambition, but for civic liberty and in the name of Rome.

5. A protracted interval of anarchy and civil bloodshed followed—and the power passed once more into the hands of a single ruler. The victory of Actium (31) over Antony made the young Octavian, Caesar's adopted son and nephew, in Shakespeare's phrase, "sole sir o' the world." Octavian, known to history by his title of Augustus, established in systematic detail the imperial system under which the Roman world was governed for wellnigh three

hundred years. The decree is still extant, inscribed on stone [1] in which he proclaimed the spirit and character of his achievement. It opens with a sentence that rings strangely to all who know the true nature of his work: "I transferred the Republic from my own authority to the control of the Roman senate and people." What can these words mean? They mean, in truth, that Augustus, in the words of a modern writer, had "learnt his lesson at the foot of Pompey's statue." Caesar's haughty spirit—we recall how Dante pictures him among the great of ancient days, "armed, with the falcon eyes" [2]—did not condescend to conciliate republican enemies by a show of civic equality and the outer forms of constitutional government. Augustus, a dispassionate, calculating master of statecraft, veiled his real autocracy under the guise of republicanism. Caesar had been called *Imperator*, the title of the victorious general; Augustus would be *princeps*, merely the chief among his fellow-citizens. In his behaviour towards the Roman nobles, the dispossessed governors of the world, he acted the part superbly. His own position, like that of his successors, rested on the grant of republican powers; the tribunitian power, which gave him control of Rome and Italy, and the *imperium* of the proconsul, which made him supreme over the army and the provinces. If incense was offered at his statue, it was but natural; religion at Rome was so much an affair of politics, and a great statesman might be canonised without an obvious breach of self-respect. The institutions of Rome and the Empire were remodelled in a like spirit. The people, *i. e.* the Roman proletariate, it is true, no longer bore any part in practical government: their assemblies

[1] The Ancyran monument (from Asia Minor).
[2] Inferno, iv. 123.

rapidly sank into a farce. But the senate, treated by Augustus both in theory and practice with high consideration, were deliberately associated by him in the government of Empire. Side by side he established an imperial and a senatorial treasury; emperor and senate alike were supreme tribunals; the provinces were divided between the two controlling powers. Augustus showed the same conservative policy in his efforts to stem the rapid decay of religion and manners in Rome by moral legislation, erection of temples and restoration of religious worships. It lies beyond our scope to recount in detail the comprehensive measures of reform which Augustus and his successors carried through in Rome, Italy and the provinces. It will be obvious that the pretence of constitutionalism was an artificial experiment designed to conciliate the former governing classes of the capital. It served this purpose for the moment: but already by the time of Augustus' death (A.D. 14) the servility of the senate showed that, in spite of outward forms, the real power rested with the emperor and with him alone. It was significant that from the first the portions of the Empire entrusted to the senate were the peaceful provinces of the interior; the frontier provinces, where the legions were concentrated, were kept by the emperor in his own hands. Attempts at moral and religious restoration were equally futile; the degeneration of the governing classes and the spread of a new culture rendered impossible a return to the simple manners and stern morality of a bygone age.

6. The task of Augustus and his ministers in the provinces was twofold, that of internal organisation and that of frontier defence. A comprehensive survey was taken throughout the Empire—an imperial "Domesday Inquest"—and the registers thus compiled and stored in provincial

archives formed the basis of a just taxation. "There went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be enrolled."[1] Public works were systematically constructed by Augustus and his successors at the imperial charge. Local government, in municipal and regional areas, was established; on the occasion of the riot when St. Paul visited Ephesus the town clerk reminded the populace that there were "Asiarchs" or provincial councillors.[2] Augustus increased the number of Roman citizens by one half; the policy of extending the franchise to provincials was developed by his successors till, by the edict of Caracalla in the third century, every free male inhabitant of the Empire became a Roman citizen. Caution is necessary in applying historical analogies; but we may gain some idea of the character of Roman imperial rule, paternal, bureaucratic, all-embracing, the source alike of peace and justice, by our knowledge of British government in India or Egypt. As with Britain in India, so with the Roman Empire, the problem of frontier defence was ever present. Augustus completed the work begun by Julius of demarcating the natural boundaries of the Empire. In the east, the Euphrates, secured by war and diplomacy as the boundary between Rome and Parthia; in the south, the deserts of Arabia and Africa, Egypt being finally annexed by Augustus after Actium; in the west, the Atlantic; on the north, the Rhine and the Danube from the North Sea to the Black Sea. The northern frontier constituted the gravest problem, for, as we have already seen, the movements of the barbarian tribes that at length swamped the Western Empire were continually pressing on the newly established frontiers. In campaign after campaign Augustus strove to master the German tribes between the

[1] Luke ii. 1. [2] Acts xix. 38.

Rhine and the Elbe; the defeat of Varus by Arminius (A.D. 9) determined him finally to fall back on the Rhine. A great wall, with forts and military camps, was erected from above Coblenz to the Danube near Regensburg, thus including the angle of the Black Forest within the Empire. The Atlantic, the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates, the Sahara—these remained the great natural frontiers of the Roman world, although the creation of Britain as a province by Claudius, and of Dacia (Hungary and Roumania) by Trajan formed additions of historical significance. On these frontiers were massed the chief armies: eight legions were stationed on the Rhine, eight on the Danube, eight on the Euphrates, while the Roman navy policed the Mediterranean. Thus was inaugurated an epoch of prosperity and good government over the whole of the civilised world, broken only when, on an emperor's death, the generals on the frontiers moved Romewards and fought for the imperial throne.

7. We may illustrate the genius of Rome as a civilising power within the field of her Empire from the history of one of the earliest of her provinces—Spain. In the third century B.C. Spain had been conquered and organised by the great Carthaginian, Hamilcar Barca, father of Hannibal; at the close of the second Punic war it passed to Rome. But Rome had to conquer the interior; natural conditions aided the native races in the guerrilla warfare, in which Spaniards have always excelled; the tasks of war and organisation continue side by side through the greater part of the second century. Between 80 and 72 Sulla's democratic opponent, Sertorius, trained the Spaniards in the arts of war and peace as instruments of resistance to the senate, educating the native youth in military colleges. The task of Romanisation was continued actively by Julius and Augustus. Fifty Spanish towns

received full citizenship: Gades and Tarraco were the centres of commerce and government respectively; Saragossa and Astorga still preserve Augustus' name: the great military and commercial highway that led from Italy round the Gulf of Lyons was continued over the Pyrenees, along the east coast of Spain, thence through the interior to the Guadalquivir and the Port of Gades (Cadiz). By the time of Augustus' death Roman language, dress and customs prevailed over a great part of the peninsula. There were three Spanish provinces; of the three legions stationed in Spain by Augustus, two could be safely removed by the close of the first century A.D. Pacification and Romanisation went hand in hand. The elder Cato had developed the mines and the culture of vine and olive in the generation after the first conquest. Julius Caesar's secretary and Augustus' librarian were native Spaniards; in the first century A.D. Spain gave to Roman literature the moralist Seneca, the republican poet Lucan, who was put to death by Nero, the geographer Mela, the agricultural writer Columella, the greatest of Roman epigrammatists Martial, the greatest of Roman literary critics Quintilian. Early in the second century she gave Rome one of her noblest emperors in the person of Trajan.

(*B*) **Graeco-Roman Civilisation** (100 B.C.–A.D. 100).—8. The two centuries from 100 B.C. to A.D. 100 were the classic age of Roman literature. We distinguish three periods within this epoch, varying in character with the changes in the public life of the Roman state.

(i) The last generation of the Republic produced two great poets, Lucretius, who expressed in hexameter verse the philosophic doctrines of Epicurus, and Catullus, whose lyrics rival those of Burns or Heine, while his range and personality recall Byron. Among prose

writers two names stand pre-eminent. Caesar's genius in literature was second only to his genius in war and statesmanship. His speeches and letters were masterpieces of Latin style; his record of the Gallic war is incomparable as a great historical narrative, for the very self-suppression of the author conveys a unique impression of his magnificent achievement. But the truest representative of the age was the orator and republican statesman Cicero, whose prose writings—speeches, letters, treatises on oratory and philosophy—were recognised as the supreme models of the Latin language in his own and all after-time. Classical Latin means Latin as Cicero wrote it. Cicero used it to embody two great orders of ideas—the greatness of Rome and the ideal of humane culture. As to the one, we may quote the words of Newman: "Cicero vividly realised the status of a Roman senator and statesman, and the 'pride of place' of Rome, in all the grace and grandeur which attached to her; and he imbibed, and became, what he admired. As the exploits of Scipio or Pompey are the expression of this greatness in deed, so the language of Cicero is the expression of it in word. And, as the acts of the Roman ruler or soldier represent to us, in a manner special to themselves, the characteristic magnanimity of the lords of the earth, so do the speeches or treatises of her accomplished orator bring it home to our imagination as no other writing could do. Neither Livy, nor Tacitus, nor Terence, nor Seneca, nor Pliny, nor Quintilian, is an adequate spokesman for the Eternal City. They write Latin, Cicero writes Roman."[1]

As a practical statesman Cicero failed: he idealised the Roman Republic, the Roman senate and Pompey, and

[1] *Idea of a University* (Lecture on *Literature*, pp. 281, 282).

tried vainly to liberalise and save the constitution when the constitution was past saving. He strove to rouse the senate from a policy of narrow class-selfishness to leadership of all the forces of law and order in Rome and in Italy. Had the Republic been capable of salvation it would have been saved by Cicero. It is equally true that if Cicero had been capable of saving it he would have recognised that the task was impossible. In the event he died rather than renounce the republican ideal. But through his works he left for after-time an imperishable memorial of the greatness of Rome. If it was Cicero the republican who was destined to inspire the French Revolution, it was Cicero the humanist who dominated the culture of the Renaissance. The matter of his philosophic writings may be lacking in originality and speculative power; but Cicero's fame as the greatest man of letters that ever lived rests rather on his style, the union in his person of the thinker and the man of affairs, and above all on this, that he embodied and expressed the urbanity and humanism that mark the Graeco-Roman age of civilisation. Thanks to the preservation of his letters, we know him better than any other historic figure of antiquity.

9. (ii) The literature of Rome was always a reflexion of national achievement. As the war with Carthage furnished a theme to Ennius, so the consolidation of the civilised world under Augustus was the central fountain of inspiration to the writers of the Augustan age. It was an age prolific in almost every field both of poetry and prose. As the name suggests, it was an age of direct literary patronage on the part of the emperor and his ministers of state. We still speak somewhat superficially of epochs such as those of Louis XIV or Anne as "Augustan" ages in French and English

literature. The favour of Augustus was free and generous, and doubtless counted as a stimulus to men of letters to celebrate the Empire and its ruler. But the chief source of inspiration was the Empire itself—the golden age of law and peace that embraced all civilised mankind, and had closed, for ever as it seemed, the disorder and tumult of the civil wars. Filled with a sense of this achievement, Livy compiled the history of Rome from its legendary beginnings to the crowning of the structure by Augustus; even the republican Horace turned from the placid delights of his Sabine farm to glorify the work of the Emperor in a splendid group of odes. But the poem which stands for ever as the supreme embodiment of the majesty and splendour of Imperial Rome is the *Aeneid* of Virgil. Almost every line is inspired by a sense of the divine destiny of the Imperial City. It was by decree of destiny that Aeneas wandered over land and sea after the fall of Troy till divine Providence established him on Latin soil to be the forefather of the founders of Rome. It is piety—filial loyalty to the gods—that is the motive of all his actions, of his desertion of Dido, the founder of Carthage, of his visit to the lower world, where he beheld the great Romans that were to spring of his lineage, of his alliance with the Latin prince and foundation of a Latin city. From first to last we are conscious of the poet's purpose—to tell how great was the labour to found the race of Rome.

10. (iii) The literature of the post-Augustan age is very different in tone. It was but for a moment that the free stream of creative imagination could find satisfaction in the fact of empire. It could not permanently coalesce with what was after all an absolute despotism. We see signs of the change already in Ovid, the last poet of the

Augustan age. A careless and irresponsible man of pleasure, a lover of society and the gay world of the capital, he possessed a marvellous skill in versification and poetic craftsmanship, and—what is more significant—for romantic narration. Ovid was not a poet of the first rank, but one of the best second-rate poets in literature. He deserves special mention in this place, because his best work the *Metamorphoses*, where the figures of Greek mythology are reflected through a strange romantic atmosphere, exercised a real influence alike on the Middle Age and on the Renaissance. Dante draws on it for his knowledge of Greek legend, and it was the favourite classic of the great humanist Montaigne. Among a host of minor writers, the close of the first century saw the appearance of the two last authors in Roman literature who rose to the first rank, the historian Tacitus and the satirist Juvenal. The literature of the Silver Age and of the Decline and Fall, like the earlier poetry of Ovid, acquires a special interest through its influence on the poets of the Middle Age.[1]

11. (iv) Meanwhile in the eastern Mediterranean the Greek language and literature held its own. The spread of Hellenism in the West had created a wider public for Greek works; every cultured Roman could read Greek. Innumerable works on history, biography, the physical sciences, literary criticism, and philosophy were composed by Greek writers in the century before and after the birth of Christ. Of the course of philosophy under the Empire and the rise of Christian theology we shall speak in a later chapter. But one name among the host of Greek authors must be mentioned here, that of Plutarch, who

[1] *E. g.* the prominence given to Statius in Dante's *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. Mediæval biographers also drew largely upon Suetonius's lives of the early emperors for style and arrangement of material.

revived the best spirit of the great days of Hellas in his life as a citizen and as a writer. He wrote much and on many subjects. His ethical treatises are of no slight interest and value. But his fame rests on his incomparable biographies of the famous men, Greek and Roman, of the past. Plutarch was not a great historian, and wrote in part for edification, in part from an ardent sympathy with noble character and noble action. But his *Lives* have probably influenced literature and history more widely than no other single work of antiquity. They furnished Shakespeare with material for his dramas; they largely inspired the idealism of the French Revolution. For young and old they still form the best introduction to the characters of Greek and Roman history. To all lovers of historic personalities they give as keen a delight to-day as eighteen hundred years ago.

(*C*) **The Roman Empire and the Birth of Christ.**—12. The change from Republic to Empire was contemporaneous with a more gradual change that was passing over the thought and life of the Graeco-Roman world. The two changes were indeed closely connected. Hellenic civilisation arose and flourished in intimate association with the city-state: the downfall of the city-state necessarily affected men's intellectual and spiritual ideals. Those ideals were henceforward dissevered from political activity. Men sought for support and consolation either in the life of philosophic speculation or in supernatural religion. Of the philosophic schools that flourished under the early Empire we shall speak in the next chapter in connexion with the decline and fall of Paganism. In religion, the conservative efforts of Augustus to restore old Roman faiths were fruitless; they could not prevail against the new and strange forms of worship that spread in this age from the East to Rome. The Egyptian

worship of Isis and the Persian worship of Mithra found many adherents in the Imperial City among those who had not the capacity or the inclination to pursue the austere paths of Greek philosophy. Those paths were for the wise and prudent, and of such there were few; others, in equal need of spiritual satisfaction, turned elsewhere, and above all towards the East.

13. Side by side with the demand for spiritual consolation on the part of the individual we remark a growing consciousness—fostered by the all-embracing scope of the Roman Empire—of the common humanity of mankind. We see its expression in the legal conception of a law of Nature, a doctrine which the jurists owed largely to the Stoic philosophers. A like spirit is evident in the rise of public philanthropy, for example, in the systematic provision for widows, orphans and paupers furnished by the paternal care of the great emperors of the second century—Trajan, Hadrian and the Antonines. But especially noteworthy is the presence of this sense of human community, of universal brotherhood, in the great epic poem of Virgil. We have spoken of the *Aeneid* as the noblest and most enduring expression of the majesty of the Roman Empire. This is the thought to which Tennyson gave utterance in his lines on Virgil—

> "Now thy Forum roars no longer,
> Fallen every purple Caesar's dome—
> Tho' thine ocean-roll of rhythm
> Sound for ever of Imperial Rome."

Other Roman poets had voiced, if in less splendid verse, their sense of Rome's imperial greatness. But there is a further quality in Virgil's poetry that has no parallel in earlier literature. He looks out upon life with a breadth of sympathy, a deep and universal tenderness, that is in

strange contrast with the pride of intellect and exclusiveness of culture which mark the literature and philosophy of his predecessors. There is a note of aristocratic *hauteur* in all the great minds of Greece and Rome—save in Virgil alone. In his catholicity of feeling Virgil is the herald of a new era in the spiritual history of mankind. Later generations, bred in the Christian faith, singled out Virgil among pre-Christian writers as an *anima naturaliter Christiana*, a spirit by nature Christian—by nature, i. e. without the aid of revelation. Doubtless the famous fourth Eclogue, in which the poet foretold the return of the Golden Age in language strikingly suggestive of the Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, gave the stimulus for this reverence for Virgil to the uncritical spirit of the early Middle Age. Doubtless, too, the imperial poet Virgil shared in their eyes the peculiar sanctity which attached to the institution of the Roman Empire. But their feeling sprang from something deeper than these more conscious motives, from the just sense that Virgil alone among pre-Christian poets shared in the democratic spirit of Christianity. It was no mere aesthetic devotion of poet to poet, nor was it a mere echo of popular tradition, that led Dante to seek Virgil's guidance through Hell and Purgatory to the threshold of the Christian Paradise.

14. Less than a generation had passed since the final institution of the Empire by Augustus when the founder of Christianity was born into the world. *Imperante Augusto natus est.* It is needless to insist here on the profound significance of this event in the spiritual life of mankind. But it is essential to point out the influence both of Roman government and Hellenic civilisation on the development and expansion of the new religion. Of this we shall speak later in relation to the fall of Paganism

and the recognition of Christianity as the religion of the Roman state. It must, however, be observed that in the hour of its triumph Christianity gave a new significance to the institution of the Empire. The coincidence in time between the foundation of the World-State and that of the World-Church naturally suggested to the devout mind of the early Middle Age that the coincidence was due not to chance or to natural causes, but to the special ordinance of Providence. As for Virgil, so, though with a new meaning, for the Middle Age, it was by divine decree that Rome was founded and grew to incorporate all mankind in one universal Empire. The divine scheme of government required a twofold unity, in things secular and things spiritual; the one was embodied in the Catholic Empire, the other in the Catholic Church. The work of Julius Caesar and Augustus as divinely appointed instruments was to gather mankind into a single state, and thereby to furnish the secular sphere for the birth and expansion of the Christian faith. It was their destiny to make the world ready to receive Christ's gospel when in due season He was born among them.

15. The Middle Age, strong in its conviction of revealed truth, made bold to interpret the historical significance of the Roman Empire in the light of the divine plan of government for the world. Modern historians are content to limit their inquiry and their judgement to its actual effects upon the happiness and civilisation of mankind. If in this spirit we ask what the establishment of the imperial system meant for the Roman world, we must rest our conclusions not so much on literary records that voice the natural hostility of republican idealists, as on the evidence for the effects of the system on the silent millions whose welfare was the chief concern of the imperial government. It is in the equitable adjustment

of taxation, in the impartial administration of law, in the founding of cities and public works, in the unimpeded development of commerce, in the extension of citizen privileges and local self-government which for the first time opened up wide prospects of advancement for all freemen, and above all in effective defence of the frontiers and the maintenance of universal peace, that the true nature of the imperial system is disclosed. In a real sense the Empire, as well as the Christian Church, brought a message of peace and good-will to men. The two great historians who have interpreted Rome to the modern world manifest a striking agreement in their verdict. Gibbon, writing in the last half of the eighteenth century, summed up his survey of the state of the Roman world in the second century A.D. in these well-known words—

"If a man were called to fix the period in the history of the world during which the condition of the human race was most happy and prosperous, he would, without hesitation, name that which elapsed from the death of Domitian[1] to the accession of Commodus.[2] The vast extent of the Roman Empire was governed by absolute power, under the guidance of virtue and wisdom. The armies were restrained by the firm and gentle hand of four successive emperors, whose characters and authority commanded involuntary respect. The forms of the civil administration were carefully preserved by Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian and the Antonines, who delighted in the image of liberty, and were pleased with considering themselves as the accountable ministers of the laws."[3]

Gibbon compiled his great work in the main from literary records; since he wrote, the progress of historical

[1] A.D. 96. [2] A.D. 180.
[3] *Decline and Fall*, ch. 3.

inquiry has laid bare a vast and varied mass of impartial and contemporary inscriptions. A century later, Theodor Mommsen embodied a comprehensive survey of this new material in his work on the Roman provinces under the Empire. His judgment, if more cautious, is to the same effect as that of Gibbon.

"Even now there are various regions of the East, as of the West, as regards which the imperial period marks a climax of good government, very modest in itself, but never withal attained before or since; and, if an angel of the Lord were to strike the balance whether the domain ruled by Severus Antoninus[1] was governed with the greater intelligence and the greater humanity at that time or in the present day, whether civilisation and national prosperity generally have since that time advanced or retrograded, it is very doubtful whether the decision would prove in favour of the present."[2]

[1] A.D. 222-235.
[2] *Provinces of the Roman Empire*, Introduction.

CHAPTER VIII

ROME: THE DECLINE AND FALL. (1) THE FALL OF PAGANISM

(*A*) **Introductory.**
- § 1. When the Decline and Fall begins.
- § 2. Scheme of the two following chapters.

(*B*) **Reconstruction of the Imperial System.**
- § 3. Changes in the character of the Empire in the second and third centuries.
- § 4. Reconstruction of the system: Diocletian and Constantine.
- § 5. Effect of the reconstruction.

(*C*) **The Roman Empire and the Christian Church.**
- § 6. Christianity breaks free from Judaism.
- § 7. Influence of Greece and Rome on the development of Christianity.
- § 8. The motive of the early persecutions.
- § 9 Effect of Christianity on the Decline of the Empire.

(*D*) **The Fall of Paganism.**
- § 10. Clash of the Hellenic and Christian ideals of life.
- § 11. Stoics and Epicureans.
- § 12. Marcus Aurelius.
- § 13. The Fall of Paganism.
- § 14. The old order and the new freedom.

(*A*) **Introductory.**—1. Gibbon dates the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire from the death of Marcus Aurelius (A.D. 180). If we look merely to the stability of the imperial system and to its success in the task of defending the frontiers, we must accept a much later date for the beginning of the end. So securely had the foundations been laid by Augustus that Rome retained her supremacy as a world state for at least four centuries after his death. The Empire preserved its efficiency in the West till the great invasions of the fifth century; in

the East it presented as secure a front to its enemies under Heraclius in the seventh century as under Diocletian in the third. But if we take a wider and a more imaginative view of history, Gibbon's conclusion must be pronounced just. Long before the barbarians broke the barriers on the Rhine and the Danube the Graeco-Roman civilisation which those barriers guarded had begun to give way to inward decline. If we think not merely of Rome, but of what Rome stands for in history, we must confess that from the moment when the despotism of the Empire was realised in the Roman world, the culture of Greece and Rome lost its creative force. The future belonged to ideas of another order, with which that culture had no sympathy. Those who resisted the new impulse and were loyal to the past were inspired by resignation, not by hope. After the close of the second century the fountain-heads of classical poetry and philosophy alike are dry. Claudian of Alexandria, the last of the classical Latin poets, was indeed writing at the beginning of the fifth century, but he was an isolated survival.

2. The purpose of this and the following chapter is not to sketch even in outline the causes and history of the Decline and Fall of Rome. Such a task would require not two chapters but a volume. I wish only to point out and illustrate in what sense the period is to be regarded as constructive in the history of civilisation. What follows may be grouped under four main headings. First, we have to speak of the reconstruction of the imperial system at the end of the third and the beginning of the fourth century, in particular of the partition of the Empire into West and East—a step fraught with deeply important results for Rome and for the Christian Church. Secondly, we have to point out how the expansion of

Christianity was conditioned both by the Roman Empire and by Hellenic culture, and to indicate the policy of the Empire towards the growing Church. Thirdly, we have to illustrate the deep-rooted opposition between the ideals of Paganism in the period of its decline and those of the new faith. These points we shall consider in the present chapter. Finally, in the next chapter, we shall point out the nature of the process by which the barbarian invaders of the fifth and sixth centuries were brought under the influence of the civilisation whose growth we have traced in the preceding portions of the work. Thus it will be clear how on the eventual fall of the imperial system, the culture which that system had unified and preserved was still powerful to influence and educate the half-civilised races who, thanks to that influence and training, have come to be the civilised nations of the modern world.

(*B*) **Reconstruction of the Imperial System.**—3. If we survey the history of the Empire in the second and third centuries we are struck first by the rapid collapse of the pretence of republicanism which Augustus had endeavoured to preserve. The veil that disguised the real fact of despotism is torn away, and this by the aristocracy of Rome and Italy rather than by the emperors. The senate and magistracies perished as active factors in the government from sheer senility and inanition. By the close of the second century despotism, working through a vast bureaucracy in Italy and the provinces, was revealed in its nakedness and accepted without a murmur through the Roman world. A second result followed logically from the substitution of the Empire for the Republic. Though Rome occupied a unique position in the Roman world, both because of her past and as the seat of government, she becomes less and less the real centre of imperial history. Even Italy is

only the premier region among the provinces which surround her. The history of the Empire is that not of the city or of Italy, but of the Mediterranean world. Two facts illustrate the character of this change. Early in the third century (A.D. 215) an edict of the Emperor Caracalla admitted to full Roman citizenship all adult males of free birth within the Empire. Henceforward the name of Roman implied no essential relationship to the imperial city or the Italian race. The second fact is that the chief problem of government became more and more one of frontier defence. The streams of barbarian invasion, checked in the last period of the Republic by Marius and Julius Caesar, threatened the Rhine and the Danube from the close of the second century; from the third century onwards, the rise of a native Persian kingdom in place of Parthia in the Middle East necessitated constant wars on the Euphrates. Lastly, the concentration of the legions on the frontiers for purposes of defence left Rome and the government in Rome at the mercy of the praetorian guards, the sole military force near the capital. In 193 the guards murdered the emperor and put the Empire up to auction to the highest bidder. The frontier legions followed suit, and a struggle of armies ensued that ended with the triumph of the Danubian army under Septimius Severus. Half a century later (237-8) we read of six claimants killed by the sword within six months. The strong ruler controlled the armies; but it was increasingly evident that this task of control, as well as that of frontier defence, required a reorganisation of the imperial system.

4. The reorganisation was instituted by Diocletian and developed by Constantine and his successors. An Illyrian slave by birth, Diocletian rose to be governor of the province of Moesia (Servia and Bulgaria), chief of the

palace guard, and emperor (A.D. 284). His work of reconstruction lay chiefly in two directions. In the first place, he organised the vast bureaucracy of imperial officials into an aristocracy, within which rank and title were proportioned to official position. The person of the emperor was surrounded by a court, where all the customary trappings of monarchy were in evidence; the various grades of the official aristocracy intervened between the emperor and the general mass of his subjects. The relics of republicanism were swept away; for the veiled autocracy of Augustus there was substituted an avowed despotism. In the second place, Diocletian partitioned the Empire. Not merely were provinces grouped in "dioceses," but the whole Empire was divided for purposes of administration among four sovereign rulers—two *Augusti* with capitals at Nicomedia (in N.W. Asia Minor) and Milan, two *Caesars*—inferior in dignity to the *Augusti*—with capitals at Treves and Sirmium (near Belgrade). The Empire was in fact put in commission among partners of senior and junior authority. Thus the burden of government was distributed, and provision secured for succession to the throne. The system did not survive precisely in the form given to it by Diocletian: under Constantine and his successors we find provinces grouped in dioceses, and dioceses in four prefectures—Spain and the Gauls, Italy, the Balkan peninsula, and the East. A generation after Diocletian Constantine founded, on the shores of the Bosporus, the city which to this day bears his name, to be a "New Rome" and the administrative centre for the eastern half of the Empire. On the death of Theodosius the Great (395) the burden of government was thenceforward shared by two emperors, in the West and at Constantinople respectively. Historians are accustomed to speak of this change as a

division of the Empire into two, an Eastern and a Western Empire. Such phrases are misleading; for though the government of the Empire was partitioned between two supreme monarchs, the Empire itself remained indivisible and one.[1]

5. The significance of these changes cannot be overestimated. For one thing, they extended the power of resistance on the part of the imperial government for several centuries both in East and West. Again, they indicate that the old Rome of the Republic had passed away for ever. The change of capitals, the inauguration of new offices and titles in place of the old magistracies, the installation of the splendour and ceremonial of an Eastern court and the avowal of despotism, imply a radical breach with the traditions of the past. Above all, the extension of citizenship and Roman rights throughout the Empire, the equality of all provincials in respect of law and office, and the enrolment of barbarian settlers in the legions, show that Rome now stood for a very different order of ideas and institutions from those of three centuries before. Rome was still Rome, but whereas she had been of old an Italian city, she had now become a world-state. It was this new Rome which confronted the barbarians when they broke through the barriers of the Rhine and Danube and, settling within the Empire, passed under the all-mastering influence of Roman administration and law. Under the early Empire the body of Roman law which had grown up in the preceding centuries was brought into system by great jurists. This codification on general principles was the central achievement of the imperial administration in regard to the inner organisation of the state. The reigns of Hadrian and the Antonines (117–180) were the golden age of Roman juris-

[1] See Bury: *Later Roman Empire*, preface.

prudence. The work of Gaius and the great jurists of that time was the basis of the later codification of law under Justinian in the sixth century. Thus the genius of Rome in the domain of law was manifested as long as Rome remained a great imperial state.

(*C*) **The Roman Empire and the Christian Church.**—6. Constantine is notable in history for two achievements, the foundation of Constantinople and the official recognition of the Christian religion. Christianity had its source in Palestine; Christ and His immediate followers were of Hebrew race and built upon Jewish religious tradition. Within a generation after Christ's death the new faith had declared its independence of Judaism. The leader in this emancipation was St. Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, himself a Roman citizen, who fearlessly took up the mission of preaching Christianity throughout the Graeco-Roman world. The capture of Jerusalem by Titus and the still more terrible subjugation under Hadrian, followed by the dispersion of the Jewish people, finally severed the tie that bound Christianity to its original home. Its source was in Judea; but its doctrine and its organisation were shaped under the influence of Greece and Rome. From the first the new faith presented two distinct and equally essential aspects. It was a message of hope and salvation to the individual Christian, proclaiming to Jew and Gentile, bond and free, life eternal through knowledge of God in Christ. But side by side with this appeal to the individual soul it established a society with visible institutions and observances; it was through membership of the Christian Church that the individual realised his loyalty to his Saviour; Christ, though ascended into Heaven, was still present as the guiding spirit of that Church among His followers on earth. With the expansion of Christianity the problem

of the organisation of the Church became increasingly urgent. Further, while Christ was with His disciples in the flesh they gathered His teaching from His own lips: it was only after His departure, above all as the faith spread to distant lands and stirred loyalty and antagonism alike, that it became necessary to determine in explicit formulas the essential convictions shared by members of the Christian community. It was in these two respects —in relation to the organisation of the Church and the formulation of doctrine—that Rome and Greece respectively set their mark on the early history of the new religion.

7. It lies beyond our scope to trace the history of Christianity from the time of St. Paul's journeys to its official recognition by Constantine early in the fourth century (A.D. 324). By that last-mentioned date three results had been achieved. In the first place Christianity had become the acknowledged faith of the greater part of the Mediterranean world. If the old religions lingered on in the country districts ("pagan" = villager), the population of the towns were generally Christian. The politic Constantine—he was not baptised until just before his death—was following, after the fashion of governments, accomplished facts when he granted first toleration and then official establishment to Christianity. By so doing he allied the secular government with the most powerful spiritual force in the Empire. Secondly, the organisation of the Church had modelled itself, as it was bound to do, on the majestic structure of imperial administration. Ecclesiastical dioceses and provinces followed the lines of secular divisions. The early rise of the Papacy was due not exclusively to the ambition of the Roman bishops, who were individually men of little significance among their contemporaries, nor even to the need for an ecclesiastical suzerain; Rome

was rich in apostolic tradition, and, above all, it was inevitable that the bishop of the Imperial City should claim and acquire a preeminent position in the ecclesiastical hierarchy. In the third place, the problem of doctrinal formulation required a medium of philosophical language, and still more a body of philosophical ideas, such as Greece, and Greece only, could furnish. At every stage in the great speculative controversies of the early centuries we can trace the influence of Hellenic thought working with subtle pervasiveness into the structure of Christian religious faith. Everywhere it brought light, clarity, the sane voice of reason; Christian doctrine informed by the Hellenic spirit shook itself clear of the wild fantasies of Oriental mysticism, illustrated *e. g.* by the tenets of the Gnostic sects. In the fourth century the controversy between Athanasius and the Arians issued in the express formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity, as embodied in the Nicene Creed. It is interesting to note that the Greek bishops of the East poured undisguised contempt on the poverty of the Latin language to express the speculative conception of Personality on which the doctrine of the Trinity rested. Finally, we remark the far-reaching effect of the division of the Empire upon the history of Christianity. The Catholic Church likewise divided into Western and Eastern branches. The natural differences of character and temperament between the Latin and the Greek sections of the Empire were at all times an obstacle in the path of unity; the partition of secular authority carried with it the expression of this difference in the fields of ecclesiastical organisation and doctrine as an inevitable issue. It is essential to realise that, however they might be divided in actual practice, in theory Church and Empire each remained undivided and one.

8. If the new faith profited alike by the reign of law and peace and by the model of imperial organisation, it was from the first confronted by opposition in the policy of the imperial government and the alien spirit of the Graeco-Roman view of life. We have noted in an earlier chapter that all through her history Rome discouraged the formation of unauthorised associations within the limits of her sway. To the officials of the early Empire the Christian Church was a secret society, and as a secret society was an object of grave suspicion. Rome was absolutely tolerant in matters of religious faith: Gallio, who "cared for none of these things"[1], was as impartial in face of the religious differences of Jew or Christian as an Anglo-Indian administrator of the present day when confronted with the antagonism of Hindu and Mohammedan. The policy of persecution was governed by purely political motives. The Christians refused to offer sacrifice before the emperor's statue. We must again remember the political character of Roman religion and realise how different was the significance of this act in the eyes of the Roman official and of the Christian martyr. To the former it was merely a symbol of political loyalty, like taking the oath of allegiance; to the latter it was an act of spiritual treason to the Divine Master. The Roman bureaucracy were wholly unable to enter into the motives that led the Christian to suffer death rather than acquiesce in what was for the Roman merely a political obligation. Hence the series of sporadic persecutions from the time of Nero to that of Diocletian; the imperial authorities strove vainly to suppress what they regarded as obstinate insubordination, while the sufferings and constancy of the victims stimulated, as is so often the case

[1] Acts xviii. 17.

with religious persecution, the enthusiasm and the influence of the persecuted Church.

9. One further aspect of the triumph of Christianity must be observed. We have pointed out the constructive influence of Greece and Rome upon the development of the new religion, for our purpose is to indicate the lines of connexion between old and new. But the opposition of spirit and ideals illustrated in the three following sections rendered it inevitable that the victory of Christianity should hasten the decay of the old political system. A modern historian, writing of the breaking up of the political order in the fourth and fifth centuries, after remarking that the atmosphere of the age in which the Empire of Rome was dismembered was that of the Christian religion, goes on to say, "In the strength of ancient ideas lay the strength of the Roman Empire; Christianity was the solvent of these ideas, and so dissolved also the political unity of Europe."[1] The same writer goes on to point out how the ideal of asceticism and celibacy, the improvement in the position of women and slaves, increased regard for human life, and, above all, the recognition of Divine law as superior to human ordinance, and the spirit of indifference to earthly forms of government, were bound to undermine the foundations on which the Roman political and social system had been based. Thus Christianity, while it allied itself with the Empire, acted as one of the chief forces that brought about disintegration and change within the system of imperial government.

(*D*) **The Fall of Paganism.**—10. We have seen that the Roman Empire at once furnished the conditions favourable to the extension and organisation of the Christian faith, and strove by deliberate policy to effect its

[1] Bury: *History of the Later Roman Empire*, ch. i.

suppression. When we consider the spiritual outlook of the Roman world in the early centuries of the new era we are confronted by a similar but far more deep-rooted contrast. Here, too, in a real sense we may say that the world was ripe for the advent of the new religion. The spiritual ideals of Graeco-Roman civilisation did not fail —for they never tried—to touch the ignorant and the vulgar. Their message was to the select few, to the aristocracy of culture and intellect. They drew a clear line of division between Hellene and barbarian, bond and free. Doubtless the old popular faiths kept a hold among the uneducated masses, but not through inner spiritual vitality: they could offer no resistance to the new faith save that of long tradition supported by official sanction. The fantastic superstitions of the East had already many adherents even among fashionable circles in Rome itself. Sculptures evidencing the worship of Mithras have been found on the verge of the Empire in Britain. Men's ears were open everywhere to new gospels; and Christianity, with its democratic message of salvation and hope, found a ready response from the multitudes of all races and grades of society to whom the philosophy of the age was unmeaning and indifferent. On the other hand, to the cultured few the very fact of its universal appeal made Christianity appear a thing contemptible; as to the Jew it proved a stumbling-block, so it was foolishness to the Greek.[1] This is the significant fact, that the most resolute opponents of the new religion were to be found among those who were most deeply permeated by the thought and ideals of Greece. It was the men most eminent in wisdom and virtue—Marcus Aurelius or Julian—who, because they realised so fully the worth of the Hellenic ideal, were the least

[1] 1 Cor. i. 23.

willing to renounce it for a faith whose spirit was essentially alien to that of Greece and Rome. We may point the contrast by reference to the governing conception of the Greek ethical ideal, that of the supreme end or good of human life. Happiness or the chief good for man was not for the Greek, as for the Christian, a heavenly fruition, the fulfilment of which was to be won through renunciation of the world, but a life of human activity to be realised in the medium of the Hellenic city-state. Nor was it a goal to which the way was open wide to all mankind; the good life was only for those who were endowed with the Hellenic character and qualified in the wisdom of the schools. Sacrifice indeed was requisite for its achievement; but the sacrifice was in the interest of this world, being that of the citizen-soldier's life in the interest of the state, or of the lower passions in the interest of philosophic reason. *Sei vornehm*—"ensue distinction"—was the animating spirit of Graeco-Roman culture; and the distinction was that of the philosopher or the statesman realising a rich personality in a world of human activities, which to the Christian were branded with the stamp of sin.

11. Among the many philosophic schools that flourished under the late Republic and the early Empire there were two which, largely because of their concentration on practical interests, appealed to cultivated citizens of Rome. These were the Stoics and the Epicureans. It has been shown in the fifth chapter how both schools were founded in the generation that followed Alexander. Both alike subordinated metaphysical inquiries to ethics. Within the field of moral philosophy both strove to determine the good life for the individual, and to show how the individual could live well and attain peace and felicity amid a turbulent world. The city-state was

yielding place to despotism, and no longer afforded scope to the individual for the active realisation of his true good. Both schools, in fact, proclaimed in their own way a message of consolation to the souls of their disciples. They portray the character of the wise man, or philosopher, and teach how this character is to be attained. But here the resemblance ceases. When we pass to the nature of the philosophic life, the two schools give widely different answers. To the Stoic the good life was that of virtue, of obedience to the law of Nature and reason; the sage, by subjugation of his lower self and detachment from the changing conditions of the world, is self-disciplined to self-sufficiency and inward freedom. To the Epicurean, the good life was that of enjoyment; the sage mastered the world by using it for his delight, not by shaking himself free from its ties; the good was pleasure—not the momentary pleasure of sense, but the calm pleasure of intellectual contemplation and intercourse with friends. At their best, Stoicism furnished the more exalted, Epicureanism the more genial and human of the two ideals. At a lower level, Stoicism meant a somewhat boorish asceticism, Epicureanism, a complacent acceptance of the ordinary pleasures of life. For both, the ideal is one of individual independence, that contrasts forcibly with the older Greek ideal of social and civic virtue. Stoicism, in particular, taught that the wise man was a member of no visible earthly community, but of the City of God —the philosophic city. "Take me, then," wrote the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus; "under the particular denomination of Antoninus, and Rome is my town and country; but consider me as a man in general, and I belong to the corporation of the world." The cosmopolitanism of the Stoics is itself profoundly significant

of the change that was passing over the world. It influenced both Roman jurisprudence in helping to shape the doctrine of a law of Nature behind the changing positive law of this or that state, and, as we have noted earlier, was applied by St. Paul, a native of Cilicia, the home of Stoicism, to express the spiritual community of the Christian Church. In his sermon at Athens, St. Paul quoted the hymn of the Stoic Cleanthes to Zeus[1]; in expressions such as "Our citizenship is in heaven" (Phil. iii. 20), "Fellow-citizens with the saints" (Eph. ii. 19), he is reflecting Stoic cosmopolitanism. Marcus Aurelius again had written: "If the poet said 'Dear city of Cecrops,'[2] may we not also say 'Dear city of God'?" St. Paul at Athens proclaimed that God "had made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth" (Acts xvii. 26).

12. But if Stoicism at this point, as well as in its insistence on moral duty, touches on the spirit of Christianity, the divergence in other respects is absolute. If it brought consolation, it was to the cultured and the wise, who were masters by their own effort of their own souls. Such were the last republicans of Rome under the early empire and the philosopher-emperor from whose book we quoted in the last section. Moreover, the support it gave rested on resignation, not on confidence or hope. It taught men, indeed, to face the storms and disillusionment of life with the unruffled calm of self-respect, and at the close to meet death, if need be by their own hand, with a melancholy fortitude. It was the creed of those who had nothing to learn or to unlearn, and who did their duty with their gaze fixed on the great things of the past. The *Meditations* of Marcus Aurelius are a

[1] Acts xvii. 28, "For we are also his offspring."
[2] *i. e.* Athens.

melancholy comment on Plato's dream, now apparently realised, of a philosopher who should be king. They reveal a noble spirit, tirelessly busied with the duties of his office in peace and war, bearing the burden with a practised cheerfulness, uncomplaining and unresentful, friends with his own soul, but without faith and without joy. He knew nothing higher than himself save the abstract order of the universe, whose inevitable law he studied to follow with loyal resignation. We bow in admiration before this grand embodiment of Pagan culture; but with a sense that that culture was now powerless to inspire the world or to recreate its youth. The *Meditations* stand for ever, in the phrase of Renan, as the gospel of those who are without religion.

13. We can see that Paganism in the hour of its fall was not unworthy of the past. We cannot here attempt to sketch the various forms of antagonism or of compromise which it assumed in the course of the final struggle. There are many analogies, for instance, between the revival of Platonism in eastern Mediterranean lands and the more mystical developments of Christian theology. The last emperor of Rome to contend against the new religion was Julian (A.D. 360–363), and his restoration of Pagan worships perished at his death. The old faiths lingered on among the simple peasants of the villages, till they were gradually extinguished in part by imperial edict, in part by the policy of transforming Pagan into Christian festivals. By the close of the fourth century the last oracles had been uttered; before the close of the fifth, the long line of Greek philosophers ends with Proclus (A.D. 410–485). Almost at the same moment the voice of Plato and Aristotle died into silence in the schools of Athens, and Christian theology found completion in a systematic body

of doctrine.[1] A new spirit had mastered the spiritual life of the nations; its home was in the East, and it took little heed for human culture or Greek philosophy. But it gave what culture and philosophy were now powerless to give—peace and joy to the soul of man.

14. The Empire too brought peace, but an external peace, and the prosperity it secured was a material prosperity. We spoke at the close of the preceding chapter of the benefits thereby conferred on the Mediterranean peoples. The happiness that prevailed under its rule was that rather of comfort and contentment than of spiritual satisfaction. The one is dependent on circumstances and can be in part imposed by governments; the other must spring from within the heart of man. The one lives in an atmosphere of complacency and ease; the other in that of energy and freedom. The majestic and all-embracing system of the Empire, however it might foster local liberties, could not fail to press with an overpowering weight upon the secular aspirations of its subjects. But in the domain of the spirit they were free, and Christianity unlocked for them the secret of their freedom. In the strength of the new-won faith they went forth gladly to meet labour and suffering, and found in that very labour and suffering the inward fruition which they craved. They cared little about the effects on the institutions or the learning of the past. The triumph of Christianity carried with it, as we have seen, the fall on the one hand of the Pagan ethical ideal and the culture which that ideal inspired, and on the other hand of the Imperial system under whose auspices the new religion had won its way to victory. Therewith

[1] The development of Christian doctrine is virtually complete after the controversies on the nature of Christ in the fifth century. See Bury: *Later Roman Empire*, vol. i, p. 16.

vanished also the reign of order and prosperity on which Gibbon and Mommsen based their eulogy of the Roman Empire. In the next chapter we shall have something to say about this process of gradual dissolution. We must bear in mind that it was the price paid by the peoples of the Western world for a new ideal of life, the revelation of which forms the true ground for the division between ancient and modern civilisation.

CHAPTER IX

ROME: THE DECLINE AND FALL. (II) THE ROMANS AND THE TEUTONS

§ 1. The function of Rome as a civilising power.
§ 2. The Empire and the Barbarians.
§ 3. The main streams of Barbarian settlement.
§ 4. How the Empire influenced the Teutonic immigrants.
§ 5. Impressions made on the Teutonic tribes by the Empire.
§ 6. The power of the Papacy in Italy.
§ 7. Restoration of the Empire in the West.
§ 8. The fortunes of the Empire in the East.
§ 9. Conclusion: Rome and the Middle Age.

The Romans and the Teutons.—1. "Christianity and civilisation," writes Mr. Bryce of the age immediately succeeding the reign of Constantine, "became conterminous with the Roman Empire."[1] At the very moment when this result had been achieved, the Empire found itself confronted with a problem, the solution of which enlarged immeasurably its range of influence on history. The problem was that of the relation between the Empire and the Teutonic barbarians who, partly as colonists, partly as conquerors, descended upon the Empire from the north and east. In our introductory chapter we indicated the threefold function of Rome in world-history. In the first place, she gathered up into one world-state and preserved from dissolution the wonderful civilisation of Greece. In the second place, in assimilating that civilisation and making it her own she enriched it through the creations of the Roman genius for law and govern-

[1] Bryce: *Holy Roman Empire*, ch. ii.

ment. In the third place, she passed on this inheritance to the younger races, who, trained in the school of Rome, developed in the ages that followed into the civilised nations of modern history. In regard to the second of these functions, we may say that by the close of the third century A.D. her work was done. Rome had no longer the creative power to add materially to the structure of Graeco-Roman civilisation. At best she could but codify and organise the creations of the past, as, for example, Justinian's jurists codified the great mass of Roman law. It was otherwise with the two other functions. Still for several centuries she kept the frontiers alike in West and East and thereby saved the Graeco-Roman civilisation from being swamped by Teuton or Saracen invaders. But it is in relation to the third task, that of implanting that civilisation among as yet uncivilised peoples, that Rome chiefly exercises a constructive influence on history in the period of the later Empire. The problem was not a new one. Already in Spain under the Republic (*see* Chapter VII, § 7) and in Gaul under the early Empire she had worked successfully at her educative mission. But from the fourth century onwards it acquired a far more extended range and was pregnant with far more fruitful issues. The Germanic races, when they passed successively within Rome's sphere of influence, though still barbarian, were endowed with rich capacities for development. In their youthful energy, their poetic imagination, their love of freedom, and, above all, their instinct for order and self-government, they possessed the natural materials of civilisation. But they needed an example and a training, and this Rome and Rome alone could give. That she gave it, and with such wonderful success, is the last and crowning achievement of the Roman Empire in history.

2. The fifth century was the epoch of what are generally described as the Barbarian Invasions. The name is somewhat misleading. Frontier wars against Teutonic tribes on the Rhine and Danube, and against the Parthians on the Euphrates, had been a constant feature of Roman history from the time of Julius and Augustus. In the second century Trajan had fought campaign after campaign in the East; Marcus Aurelius spent a large part of his reign warring against the Marcomanni on the upper Danube. Before the fourth century it became part of the deliberate policy of the Empire to colonise districts within the provinces with barbarian immigrants. The new settlers supplied both recruits for the legions and a remedy for the increasing depopulation of the Empire. But they constituted a new and dangerous element which assisted the gradual breaking up of the old political and social system. On the one hand, the line of partition between Roman and Teuton grew less rigid: by the fifth century a barbarian might hold any office in the state save that of emperor. On the other hand, Germanic colonists within the pale of the Empire were a source of continual unrest and were frequently disposed to ally themselves with Germanic tribes beyond its borders. The reorganisation under Diocletian and his successors rendered possible the maintenance of the old frontiers during the fourth century. Before 400 A.D. fresh streams of Teutonic immigrants had broken the Roman barriers and entered into possession of wide tracts in the Western provinces. They accepted in most places the nominal overlordship of the emperor, with the result that there arose Germanic kingdoms in Gaul, Spain and Italy, whose rulers were in theory vicegerents of the emperor but in practice independent princes.

3. We may summarise as follows the main streams of barbarian invasion and settlement:—(i) The Franks settled the lands west of the Rhine from Calais and Amiens to Basel, and under Clovis (A.D. 481–511) became a great and organised power over northern Gaul and central Germany. (ii) The Visigoths crossed the Danube and attacked the Eastern emperor in 378; driven from the east by Theodosius, they spread westwards, and under their king, Alaric, captured Rome itself (A.D. 410). Early in the fifth century they formed a state under imperial recognition in southern Gaul and Spain. They were driven out of Gaul by the Franks, but retained their Spanish dominions until the Saracen conquest of the peninsula in the eighth century. (iii) In the middle of the fifth century the Empire was threatened by a different and far more dangerous foe. The Franks and Goths were Teutons, as also were the Vandals and Lombards, of whom we shall speak later, men of kindred Aryan stock to the Romans, and endowed with a capacity for settled life and civilised government. But the Huns were Scythians, wild horsemen from the steppe lands north of the Black Sea and the Caucasus, and, alone of the invading races, they came as mere destroyers. Under their king, Attila, they swept over the West, till their power was broken by the united forces of Rome and the Visigoths at a great battle near Troyes (451). Two issues of their devastating onset are of permanent interest. Attila's grim figure looms mysteriously in the Teutonic and Scandinavian Sagas. Moreover, the peril of his onset gave the first occasion for united action in a common cause between the Roman and the German. The foundations were thus laid of the union that ripened three and a half centuries later into the recognition of

a Germanic king as emperor of the Roman Empire. (iv) The Vandals, a Germanic race akin to the Goths, overran Africa in the first half of the fifth century, and in 455 sacked Rome; their African kingdom fell later before the generals of Justinian (527–565). (v) Later in the fifth century the Ostro-Goths (East Goths) entered Italy, and in 476 an Ostrogothic chief, Odoacer, deposed the reigning emperor, a boy prince, who bore the significant name of Romulus Augustulus. Henceforward no emperor ruled in Italy; the land was governed by Teutonic princes in nominal allegiance to the Emperor at Constantinople. The deposition of Romulus Augustulus did not bring a Western Empire to its end; for, as we have remarked, the Empire was one and indivisible; but it terminated the system of dual government by two imperial rulers. Henceforward, till 800, there is but one emperor, who reigns from Constantinople. In the middle of the sixth century Justinian overthrew the Ostrogothic rule in Italy; his victories united for a time Italy, Sicily and Africa under Constantinople. It seemed as though the new Rome in the East would replace the old Rome as the centre of government for the Mediterranean world. But (vi) in 568, only three years after Justinian's death, Lombards invaded the northern plain of Italy. Italy was partitioned between the Lombards in the north, the bishops of Rome in the Imperial City, and the viceroys of the emperor at Constantinople in Ravenna and the adjoining district. The Lombard invasion was the last; by this time the Germanic nations had entered definitely into the inheritance of the western provinces. In the East, as we shall see at the close of this chapter, the imperial government held its ground, alike on the Danube and the Euphrates.

4. This bare outline of the chief among the barbarian

invasions needs to be supplemented by two observations on the nature of the change thus effected in the western provinces. In the first place, the settlements were spread over many generations, successive swarms of Teutonic immigrants acquiring settlements within the Roman frontiers. We have remarked that it was part of the imperial policy to employ earlier colonists for defence of the frontiers against enemies from without. Thus the Visigoths aided the Empire to repel the Huns, as at a later date the Franks beat back the Saracens. It followed that the earlier settlers were initiated into Roman civilisation as well as into the Christian faith before a fresh band of invaders broke the barriers. The historical significance of this process of Romanisation cannot be overestimated. It meant that the language, law and religion of the Empire set their mark on successive groups of colonists, who on their side by their acceptance of these benefits richly rewarded the policy of their Roman masters. Thus arose the Romance languages of southern Europe; native custom developed into legal codes; above all, commerce and the habits of settled life arose among races that had lived hitherto by war and plunder. By the time that the Teutons threw off their allegiance to the Empire they had entered into the priceless heritage of law and order bequeathed to them by Rome. In the words of a modern historian,[1] "the Roman Empire was never overthrown, but took the barbarians into itself, and so went on changing slowly till it passed away."

5. Secondly, we remark the deep impression which the majestic structure of Roman government and civilisation wrought on the imagination of the invaders. It would have been natural enough had the luxury, corruption and effeminate culture of the later Empire inspired a

[1] Bishop Creighton.

profound contempt in the minds of its rude and warlike conquerors. How otherwise, we are inclined to ask, could Alaric the Visigoth have felt towards the feeble and degraded Honorius? But it was not so; or, if contempt was felt, it was silenced by the overpowering spectacle of what Rome had achieved and still stood for in the eyes of the world. It was the Empire, not the person or court of the emperor, that took captive the barbarian victors, as at an earlier day Greece had captivated Rome. The successor of Alaric felt pride in his recognition as a vassal prince by the Roman emperor. "It was at first," he said, "my wish to destroy the Roman name, and erect in its place a Gothic empire, taking to myself the place and the powers of Caesar Augustus. But when experience taught me that the untamable barbarism of the Goths would not suffer them to live beneath the sway of law, and that the abolition of the institutions on which the state rested would involve the ruin of the state itself, I chose the glory of renewing and maintaining by Gothic strength the fame of Rome, desiring to go down to posterity as the restorer of that Roman power which it was beyond my power to replace. Wherefore I avoid war and strive for peace."[1] Athanaric at Constantinople broke out with the cry, "Without doubt the emperor is a God upon earth, and he who attacks him is guilty of his own blood."[2]

The conversion of the Germanic tribes to Christianity deepened this impression. Not only were the interests of the Church closely allied with those of the Empire since the official recognition by Constantine; but, as we have already seen, the Church came to regard the Empire with peculiar reverence as the divinely predestined instrument

[1] Quoted from Orosius by Bryce: *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 19.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 17.

for the protection of the Christian faith. "When Rome, the head of the world, shall have fallen," wrote Lactantius, the Christian apologist, in the days of persecution, "who can doubt that the end is come of human things, aye, of the earth itself? She, she alone, is the state by which all things are upheld even until now."[1] Thus a secular and a religious sanctity attached to the Empire in the minds of the newly-converted colonists. Thus there grew up, in detachment from the actual facts of its dissolution, the idea of the Empire as the natural and divinely sanctioned order, to which—in right, if not in fact—all nations and governments under heaven owed their authority and their allegiance. The Empire came to be regarded as not merely sacred and eternal, but as indivisible and one. We have seen that the deposition of the Western emperor in 476 by Odoacer the Ostrogoth in no way implied the fall of the Roman Empire. Two hundred years later the documents cited by Bede are dated by the regnal years of the emperors at Constantinople. The Augustus who ruled in the West had fallen, but the Empire remained. We must grasp clearly the distinction between the idea of the Empire in theory and its realisation in fact. Just as the Church remained, in the beliefs of mediaeval Europe, by right the one Catholic or Universal Church, despite the actual severance of the Latin Christians in the West from the Greek Christians in the East, so was it also with the Empire. We referred in an earlier chapter to the magnificent conception which finds its loftiest expression in the works of Dante. In that conception God's government of mankind rests on the principle of unity—for government to be good must be government by one. This principle of unity operates through two sovereign powers—vice-

[1] *Holy Roman Empire*, p. 21.

gerents of God upon earth for man's salvation—supreme respectively in things spiritual, and in things secular—the one Catholic Church under the Pope and the one Catholic State under the emperor.

6. We can thus appreciate the significance of the great historical event that took place in St. Peter's Church at Rome on Christmas Day, 800. On that day a German king was crowned as Roman emperor by Pope Leo the Third. From the death of Theodoric the Ostrogoth in 526 Italy had been rent asunder by rival powers. The reconquest by Justinian was short-lived. In the north ruled heretic Lombards; at Ravenna, the exarch or viceroy of the emperor at Constantinople clung with pathetic tenacity to the last remnants of sovereignty. Rome and a considerable portion of central Italy looked to the Pope as its defender and its sovereign. The power of the Papacy had been widely extended at the close of the sixth century by Pope Gregory the Great. The Bishop of Rome was not merely the effective spiritual head of Latin Christendom; he was secular ruler of the patrimony of St. Peter—the territorial possessions that the Church had acquired both within and outside of Italy. "The independence of the Popes was struck like a spark between the rival temporal powers that divided Italy." In their struggle to maintain their secular independence against the emperor and the cause of orthodox Christianity against the Lombards, the Popes of the eighth century turned for assistance to the Franks. The Franks were orthodox and masters of a mighty dominion north of the Alps. In the middle of the century the Pope aided Pippin, the Frankish mayor of the palace, to depose the last of the Merovingian kings (751), and conferred on him the title of Roman Patrician. Pippin

[1] Bury: *Later Roman Empire*, ch. ii, p. 156.

on his side descended into Italy, broke the Lombard power, and handed over Ravenna and a large part of northern Italy to the Pope. Strong in Frankish support, Pope Hadrian I in 781 broke definitely loose from allegiance to the emperor at Constantinople. The power of the exarchs ceased in Italy.

7. The institution of the Frankish king as emperor was the natural though unexpected outcome of these events. On the memorable Christmas of 800, Charles the Great (Charlemagne) was crowned Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. It is true that the new successor of Augustus was a Germanic chieftain; but the Empire had never rested on an hereditary basis; there was no qualification as to nationality; as early as the second century the Spaniard Trajan had been called to the imperial throne. Thus in the person of a Frankish king the theory of the Empire secured practical embodiment. The act did not imply the restoration of a Western empire, for the Empire was one; Charles the Great and his successors were at once the inheritors of the rights of Augustus and the sole vicegerents of God in the secular government of the world. It lies beyond our scope to trace the growth either of the mediaeval theory of the Empire, or of its actual history through the ten centuries that followed. For the former the reader may be referred to Dante's tractate *De Monarchia*, and to the closing cantos of the *Purgatorio*. For the history of the Empire in fact, it suffices to observe that it survived through the long struggle with the rival power of the Popes in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries, through the rise of the nations of modern Europe, through the storms of the Reformation and the French Revolution, till—long after it had ceased, in Voltaire's phrase, to be either Holy or Roman or an Empire—it

was finally extinguished by Napoleon in the first years of the nineteenth century.

8. Once more, and in conclusion, we turn to Constantinople and the East. The emperors at Constantinople from the fifth century onwards preserved the imperial system and resisted the onset of the barbarians far more effectually than their colleagues in the West. Justinian in the sixth century, Heraclius in the seventh, Leo III in the eighth, guarded the frontiers and kept the gates of civilisation with a success worthy of the days of Augustus or Trajan. Justinian, as we have already seen, recovered a large part of the West for the Empire; on the Euphrates he beat back the Persians; in internal administration he made himself absolute in state and Church, organised Roman law into a system of jurisprudence, and in his public works and buildings erected enduring memorials of his power. His cathedral of Santa Sofia remains to this day the chief glory of Constantinople. Heraclius (610-641) dealt a deathblow to the Persian Empire in the middle East. Leo III (717–740) triumphed over the Saracens and saved Europe from Mohammedan subjugation from the East, as the Frankish king, Charles Martel, saved her from a like subjugation from Spain. The Mohammedan power appeared in the seventh century and with astounding rapidity mastered Syria, Egypt and Africa. Early in the eighth the Saracens conquered Spain and poured into Gaul, till they were beaten back by Charles Martel at a decisive battle fought between Poitiers and Tours (732). Historians have dwelt too exclusively on the danger that thus beset Europe in the West. It has been left to recent writers to insist on the equal, if not greater, danger from which the Eastern Empire saved Europe by its effective resistance to the Saracens. In the concluding chapter of his history,

Bury summarises under four heads the service rendered to civilisation by the Eastern Empire between the fifth and the fifteenth centuries—protection from the Oriental danger, preservation of the traditions of Greek and Roman culture, maintenance of European commerce, and the preservation of the idea of the Roman Empire. It was to the Empire in the East that Russia owed her religion and her culture. Above all, as we shall see in the next chapter, in the fifteenth century the West learned again from the East the secret of Hellenic civilisation. Long before the birth of the Renaissance Byzantine art had given the impulse to that of Southern Europe in the Middle Age. The Eastern Empire fought long in the cause of order and civilisation, and in the event died hard. Through the Middle Age its sway was confined to the Danubian provinces, the Balkan peninsula, and a fragment of Asia Minor. These possessions required defence both against Crusaders and Venetians from the West, and the ever-present peril of the Saracens in the East. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the Turks began to press victoriously on the imperial frontiers. The death agony was prolonged for generations; slowly but surely the enfeebled government at Constantinople, unsupported by national vitality, yielded before its foes. The Empire dwindled into a small Greek state round the walls of the capital, till in 1453 Mahomet the Second captured Constantinople, and the Roman Empire in the East ceased to be.

9. In this and the three preceding chapters we have traced the history of Roman civilisation from the early beginnings of the Roman city to the fall of the Roman Empire and the opening of the Middle Age. When Rome gathered the rich harvest of Hellenic culture within her stronghold, the soil from which it sprang had ceased to

be creative; the inspiration that the world could draw from Greece was already that of the classic past. Greek culture had still the power to refine the rude temper of the Roman race; if it lost something of its virtue, it fused with the Roman genius for law and government to produce the literature and the manners of the Augustan Age. This Graeco-Roman civilisation—Greek transformed through a Roman medium—the Empire slowly but indelibly impressed upon the peoples of the north. Rome had apprehended but a portion of the Hellenic spirit; Franks and Goths and Lombards learnt but a small fragment of the message spoken to them by Rome. But what they learnt they used to mould into reasonable and fruitful forms the rude material of native custom and imagination. We are wont to speak of the centuries following on the break up of the Empire in the West as the "Dark Ages." The term implies a restricted outlook on the history of the time. It is true that the dominant influence of the Christian Church discouraged human learning, looked with scorn on the thought and art of the Pagan past, and subjected the free exercise of reason to the control of theological authority. But none the less the inheritance of the past, the structure of civilisation that reason had built up, continued—most of all through the system of the Church itself—to shape the thought and life of mediaeval Europe. Whenever the thinkers of the Middle Age thought on matters human or divine—and they thought deeply on both,—whenever its builders or its poets gave utterance to its aspirations in stone or song, whenever its lawgivers and statesmen, in Church or state, fashioned step by step its national institutions, they did these things in the strength of what they had learnt through Rome. The material was their own; to the decaying vitality of the Mediterranean peoples Christianity had brought a new

spiritual outlook and the Germanic races a fresh vigour, a health of manhood, a poetic imagination, and above all a love of national freedom, that transformed utterly and entirely an outworn world; but the discipline that trained this material to fruitful issue was furnished by the rich inheritance bequeathed to them by the Roman Empire. Everywhere in the Middle Age we see the spirit of Rome in action; what seemed in the time of the Renaissance, as men looked backwards, the "Dark Ages" was in reality the epoch of the birth-throes of the culture of the modern world.

CHAPTER X

THE HISTORICAL INTEREST OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION

§ 1. Ordered progress of Western civilisation.
§ 2. Contrast between Roman and Greek history.
§ 3. Twofold interest of Greek and Roman culture: (*a*) historical, (*b*) as a living inspiration.
§ 4. Illustrations of its historical interest: (i) Influence of the Roman Empire on Early Britain.
§ 5. (ii) Influence of the Roman Empire on the Church.
§ 6. (iii) Influence of Greek philosophy on mediaeval thought.
§ 7. Contrast of the Middle Age and the Renaissance.
§ 8. (iv) Influence of Greek culture on the Renaissance.
§ 9. Fruits of the Revival of Learning.
§ 10. Erasmus as a type of modern Humanism.
§ 11. Influence of the Revival of Learning on England.

1. Two conclusions, each of a very general character, emerge from our brief survey of the history of ancient civilisation. One is this: that what we understand by Western civilisation, from its early beginnings in the city-states of Greece up to the time when the modern nations arise out of the wreckage of the Roman Empire, displays throughout the character of an ordered and progressive evolution. This was before all things due to the genius of the Greek race, which stamped on all its products the hall-marks of individuality and life. Their culture strove everywhere after system and unity; political action, artistic creation, intellectual inquiry were in each phase of their development modes in which the life of the race manifested itself, with rich variety but with a common spirit. It is precisely this organic character of Greek and Roman civilisation that marks it

off so clearly from that of the East. In the history of the East phase follows phase in interminable cycles without inner connexion or ordered sequence; as "Amurath an Amurath succeeds," each conquering race develops its own culture in almost complete indifference to that which it supersedes, and in turn gives way to a successor equally indifferent to its achievements. This is the monotony so often remarked in Eastern history; the monotony of cycles of civilisation that rise and fall, but are bound together by no tie of progress.

2. The second conclusion is suggested by the contrast between the work of Rome and that of Greece in history. The two peoples represent respectively the idea of order and that of freedom. Rome stood consistently throughout her development for the cause of law and government; her mission was to keep the peace, and she pursued it in sublime indifference to the hopes and ambitions of those beneath her sway. With unswerving persistence she set before them the choice either to accept her rule with resignation or to be crushed into submission. It is true that in the early days of the republic the Romans were a free people, and it was their racial instinct for solidarity that won for them an empire, first in Italy and later over the Mediterranean world. But when once that empire was in full being, the freedom of the Roman people degenerated even in Italy into an empty name. Thenceforward Rome wrought out her destiny regardless, not indeed of the interests, but of the aspirations of her subject populations. There is something terrible in the relentless impartiality of the Imperial system. The local self-government and personal freedom which prevailed under its sway to an extent hitherto unknown must not blind us to the fact that these liberties depended solely on the sanction of the Imperial government. The fate of the

world rested on that government, and on it alone. Its universal dominion meant the triumph of the cause of order over that of freedom. The Greeks, on the other hand, had essayed a different and a far harder task. With them the forces of law and order sprang directly from the free impulse of the people who had evolved the city-state, and they reflected, while they endeavoured to control, the aspirations that gave them birth. Greece never despaired in her effort to unite the cause of order with that of liberty. We know the issue: that in the field of practical government popular passion prevailed over the power of law. Yet, if Greece failed, she failed in a heroic enterprise and amply atoned elsewhere for her political dissolution. In the field of knowledge she founded the intellectual order which has ever since controlled the thought of civilised mankind. It was a true insight that led her philosophers to give the primacy to the life of contemplation over that of action. The Roman Empire has perished; that of Greece is over the mind of man and endures.

3. These considerations help to explain not merely the logical development of Greek and Roman civilisation, but its influence on the subsequent history of the West. In these pages we have dwelt especially on those aspects which have gone to fashion the thought and culture of the modern world. In two ways the Greeks and Romans have an enduring claim on our interest; on the one hand, in that their work still lives among us as an inspiration and an example; on the other hand, in that, whether we recognise it or no, our civilisation is in large measure the outcome of theirs. Of the former of these claims we shall speak in the concluding chapter. In regard to the latter, we may emphasise what has been already said by a few selected illustrations of the historical

influence of Greece and Rome on mediaeval and modern civilisation. No reader is likely to question the greatness of the debt we owe to Rome. But the debt we owe to Greece is yet greater. That we are less ready to recognise this is due to the fact that Greek culture has influenced later ages largely through the medium of Rome. On the other hand, when we think of the living influence of the creations of ancient civilisation as we study them at the present day, our obligation to Greece is at once seen to be preeminent.

4. (i) First let us consider the influence on Britain of the Roman occupation. Britain lay on the remote outskirts of the Roman world; its occupation under Claudius constituted the only permanent exception to the principle that the Empire should not spread beyond the limits determined by Augustus. It was governed as part of the Empire for almost four hundred years. Three legions (more than 15,000 soldiers), recruited largely from the Romanised natives, were continuously stationed in the island. The influence of Roman civilisation was restricted, save for a brief interval, to the regions south of the Wall that Hadrian built from Newcastle to Carlisle, of which much is still standing. Within this area Cornwall and the mountainous north-west were practically untouched by Rome, and the thinly populated forest lands in the centre of England lay for the most part outside her influence. In the north there were extensive military settlements massed chiefly along the Wall and in the town of York. But in the west and south, especially in Gloucestershire, Hampshire and Sussex there was, as is shown by the numerous remains of isolated Roman villas, a considerable population of Roman civilians, and it was there mainly that Rome set her mark on the Celtic population. As in all parts of the Empire, the rule

of Rome meant colonies and military roads. Colchester, Lincoln, York and Gloucester were Roman colonies, Verulamium (St. Albans) enjoyed the higher dignity of a *municipium*. York was the scene of the coronation of the Emperor Constantine and of the burial of the Emperor Severus. Of the great roads, Watling Street ran north-west from London to Wroxeter and Chester, Ermine Street from Colchester by Huntingdon and Lincoln to York, the road from London by Staines forked at Silchester into branches towards Southampton, Salisbury and Gloucester, the Fosse Way ran diagonally from Lincoln by Newark and Leicester to Bath and Seaton on the Devon coast. Forest land was cleared for agriculture; Britain supplied corn to the Rhine legions; British builders were known over Western Europe, British cloth was exported, Kentish oysters were in great request at Rome, and the south-eastern ports became thriving centres of trade. The Roman language spread first among Celtic nobles, then among the main body of the native population in the south and east: Roman law and methods of government were potent instruments of civilisation. Plutarch tells of his conversation with a Greek teacher returning from Britain to his home on the shores of the Levant. With the extension of Christianity Britain came within the pale of the Church—the foundations of a Christian church have been disclosed at Silchester; the new faith spread beyond the bounds of the Empire to Wales and Ireland. At the very beginning of the fifth century, dissensions in the Empire and the Visigothic invasion of Italy led to the gradual abandonment of Britain by the imperial government. The resistance offered to the Saxon invaders was largely the struggle against barbarism of the culture which the Britons had received from Rome. The half-historical, half-legendary figure of

Arthur is the impersonation of this Romano-Celtic opposition. With the Saxon occupation, most of the traces of Rome's influence perished; Anglo-Saxon law owed nothing to that of Rome, Christianity gave way to heathenism, save in Ireland and the unconquered mountain districts of Wales, and the Roman colonies were devastated by the invaders; yet a remnant of the Celtic population can be traced under Saxon masters in Kent and Wessex, the clearings of cornland and, above all, the great roads preserve the record of Roman policy, and the coins of Anglo-Saxon kings are modelled on the effigies of Roman emperors. With these few exceptions the Roman occupation left no direct traces on subsequent history. We have to look elsewhere for the later and indirect influence of Rome on English civilisation. In the centuries between the Saxon conquest and the Renaissance the influence of Rome was felt afresh by Britain in three ways. First, the conversion of Saxon Britain by Augustine at the close of the sixth and the beginning of the seventh centuries introduced once more through the Church the Latin tongue, Latin literature, and in course of time the canon law of the Church based on that of Rome. Moreover, it is of great interest to remark how the earlier Christianity lived on and throve in Wales and Ireland, how with the stimulus added by the British Saint Patrick to Irish Christianity, Ireland became a great seat of learning, Irish missionaries settled in Northumbria in the eighth century, and thence gave the inspiration to the great ninth-century schools founded by the Frankish Charles the Great in Western Europe. Again, the Norman conquerors in the eleventh century brought over with them their Romance language —Norman-French—thus aiding the Church to fuse Roman elements into the speech of Britain. Thirdly, in

the later twelfth and the thirteenth centuries the existing law, resting on Saxon and Scandinavian foundations, was gradually enriched by the English jurists who imported the principles of the Roman civil law—the code of Justinian—from the great legal university of Bologna. Thus prior to the Humanistic culture of the Renaissance English civilisation had been profoundly leavened by the religion, law and speech of ancient Rome.

5. (ii) Secondly, let us take the effects of the Roman Empire on the subsequent history of the Christian Church. We have seen how the Empire, while still unimpaired, impressed its stamp on the external structure of Christianity. This is evidenced most strikingly in the rise to ecclesiastical supremacy of the bishops of the Imperial City. From the fifth century onwards the widening breach between the governments of the Western and the Eastern divisions of the Empire made itself felt also as ecclesiastical rivalry between the Western and the Eastern divisions of the Church. The severance was intensified by the difference in thought and temper between the peoples of Western and Eastern Europe, a difference that tended to display itself in the field of theological doctrine. When in the eighth century the Popes openly cast off allegiance to Constantinople and instituted a Frankish king as emperor at Rome, the formal separation of the Latin and Greek Churches became only a question of time. Thus the division of the Empire into East and West was reflected in the separate life of the Church that looked towards Rome and the Church that looked towards Constantinople. The Eastern Church, ever since the reign of Justinian, had been far more closely dependent on the secular power than that of the West. By the time when the Turks overthrew the Eastern Empire the peoples of north-eastern Europe had embraced Greek

Christianity; to this day the rulers of Russia bear the title of Caesar (Tsar), and the religion of Russia, as of other peoples of Eastern Europe, is the religion of the Eastern Empire. In the West, Empire and Papacy subsisted throughout the Middle Age as rival claimants to universal dominion. Their conflict is the central issue of mediaeval history. The Papacy possessed temporal as well as spiritual dominion, and claimed a yet wider power than it possessed. In truth, the Papacy, fashioned in the likeness of the Roman Empire, claimed the authority and mission of that Empire. Thus the very antagonism of the Papacy and the later Empire evidences the influence of the older Empire on the Papacy. Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, writing in the middle of the seventeenth century, spoke of the Papacy as "no other than the ghost of the deceased Roman Empire sitting crowned upon the grave thereof." So at least it seemed to the Protestant philosopher and arch-enemy of ecclesiastical dominion. In his essay on von Ranke's *History of the Popes* Macaulay insisted with his accustomed energy of style on the historic significance of the Roman Catholic Church. "The history of that Church," he wrote, "joins together the two great ages of human civilisation. No other institution is left standing which carries the mind back to the times when the smoke of sacrifice rose from the Pantheon, and when cameleopards and tigers bounded in the Flavian amphitheatre." Throughout its history, in the temporal power, in the canon law, in organisation, in its policy towards subordinate associations, as well as in tradition and seat of government, the Papacy preserves to this day the inheritance of Imperial Rome. The Popes issued rescripts as the emperors had done, the Papal court (Curia) was modelled on the imperial. Above all, in its conflict with

the secular power—a conflict of which the echoes are still audible—we have evidence of the historic continuity of spirit from the Empire to the Papacy. It was while listening to the barefooted friars chanting the office among the ruins of the Capitol that Gibbon conceived the idea of narrating the decline and fall of the Roman Empire.

6. (iii) In the two foregoing illustrations we have dealt with the indirect influence of ancient culture as it acted through the Roman Church, Roman law and Roman government upon the mediaeval and modern world. Up to the time of the Renaissance Greek thought and literature affected the peoples of Europe almost exclusively through the medium of Rome. Most of the Greek classics were unknown to the Middle Age; those that were known were known only to the learned few. Dante's knowledge of Greek literature was very fragmentary, and derived solely from Latin poetry and Latin translations of Aristotle; the only one of the three great Athenian dramatists that he mentions is Euripides,[1] while of Plato's dialogues he knew only the *Timaeus*, and that in a Latin translation. Still more striking is men's ignorance of Aristotle in the original at a time when Aristotle ranked supreme as a philosophical authority. In their speculations both on things human and things divine, Dante and Thomas Aquinas are influenced at every point by Aristotle. The conception of God in the *Paradiso* as "the Love that moves the sun and the other stars," Himself changeless and unmoved, is expressed in language that again and again reflects Aristotle's *Metaphysics*. In Ethics, mediaeval philosophers placed side by side the divine virtues —faith, hope, love—revealed to the Christian Church, and the four cardinal virtues—wisdom, fortitude, temperance

[1] Purg. xxii., 106.

justice—of the Greek philosophers. If the Church was the supreme authority in the interpretation of law divine, Aristotle was the supreme authority in the law of nature or reason. It is noteworthy that it was not Greek art or poetry, but Greek philosophy that thus kept its hold on the Middle Age. The Teutonic nations had their native poetry. Frank and Norman raised in stone the castles and churches that for all time stand as expressions of their native genius; but when they inquired into the nature and causes of things they turned, as the civilised world has always turned, to Greece as their master. If they learnt their lesson imperfectly, it was partly because they knew Greek thought only through the medium of Latin or Arabic translations, partly because an age whose inquiry was controlled by religious authority was unable to appreciate the freedom of rational inquiry that was the vitalising force in Greek philosophy. Only when Europe outgrew her discipline, and the mind claimed emancipation from authority, could the spirit of man again find itself at home in the culture of ancient Greece.

7. (iv) We pass to consider the most striking example of the power of ancient culture to leaven and shape modern civilisation—the effect of the rediscovery of Greek learning in the age of the Renaissance.

We have already called attention to the fact that the name "The Dark Ages" was applied to the mediaeval epoch by those who in the later period of Humanism and enlightenment looked back with contempt upon the past. As applied generally to the Middle Age the name is a misnomer. It is true in a measure of the early mediaeval period before the eleventh and twelfth centuries. But the learning of John of Salisbury in the twelfth century, the speculative vigour of Abelard in the twelfth, and of Thomas Aquinas in the thirteenth, were worthy

of any epoch of civilisation. The Middle Age saw the institution of the great universities of Paris, Oxford and Bologna. The thirteenth century was the period when the civil law of Western Europe was moulded by great jurists on the principles of the code of Justinian. No poet in all literature has given expression to so comprehensive a range of thought and culture as Dante. From the twelfth century onward the civilisation of Western Europe is a constant anticipation of the Renaissance. The true contrast lies in this: that the central interest of mediaeval thinkers lay not in the interpretation of Nature, but in the domain of human conduct, the destiny of the human soul, the scheme of Divine government. It was the other-worldliness of mediaeval thought that contrasted vividly with the enthusiasm of the Renaissance for knowledge of man in his relation to Nature and Nature in its relation to man. The Renaissance stood, in fact, for a two-fold revolution. On the one hand, it appealed to reason against authority, to unfettered freedom of inquiry against unquestioning submission to dogma; on the other hand, it viewed the life of man amid his earthly environment, not as—what it was for Dante—the antechamber of Heaven and Hell, but as of intrinsic worth and beauty, as it appeared on the Creation morning, a thing that was very good.

8. The Renaissance drew its inspiration direct from classical antiquity. We are told in all the histories how the exodus of Greek teachers to Italy as the Turks closed round Constantinople in the fifteenth century revealed the secrets of Greek literature to the wondering gaze of the Western world. Broadly, this is the truth; though the thought of the West was already astir, the young nations, trained to manhood under the strong discipline of religious and secular authority, had already put forth

their strength and were eager for knowledge and discovery. We have remarked above that the Renaissance had its prophetic anticipations in the very heart of the Middle Age. Human nature and the world amid which it lived and moved were already the centre of intellectual interest when the rediscovery of Hellenic culture broke upon the West. What, we ask, was the secret which that rediscovery disclosed? It was not so much the actual attainment of positive science or philosophy embodied in Greek literature, though this attainment stretched far beyond the horizon of the scientific speculation of the Middle Age. The writings of the astronomer Ptolemy, for example, were reverenced almost as a Bible by the cosmographers and explorers of the epoch of the great discoveries. It was in part the revelation of their beauty in art and poetry that fixed the gaze of painters and poets on the deathless masterpieces of the Hellenic genius. But most of all they drew inspiration from the spirit that informed the life and thought of Greece, the trust in reason, the habit of free discussion and inquiry, the untiring energy of thought and action, the delight in the actual world, present before their eyes as a field alike for practical experiment and for reasoned knowledge. This was the key that unlocked to the peoples of the modern world the gate of their earthly paradise.

9. They were swift to reap the fruits of their discovery. Familiar as we are to-day with the bold advance of science, we read with amazement of the marvellous achievements that mark the golden age of the Renaissance. If we take the brief period of little more than seventy years—the span of a single human life—between the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and the sack of Rome by the Germans in 1527, we find that within it were securely laid the foundations of the structure of the positive knowledge of succeeding

centuries. The discoveries comprehended the whole realm of Nature and of man. (*a*) The physical surface of the globe was explored. Maritime explorers, trained in the new learning at the school founded by Prince Henry of Portugal (1394–1460), navigated the Atlantic Coast of Africa, rounded the Cape (1486–9), and laid open to the Portuguese the wealth of the Indies. As the fruit of the same scientific impulse, in union with the desire for commercial expansion, Columbus (1492) reached the shores of the New World, and Magellan's expedition (1519–22) circumnavigated the globe. The results of these epoch-making discoveries and of numberless others in the same period are evidenced in the revolution that in the next century came about in the fields of commerce and of empire. The whole succeeding history of the world has been in increasing measure Oceanic. But Oceanic civilisation had its roots in the Mediterranean epoch. It was in the strength of the new learning, based on ancient Greece, that the initial discoveries were made. And the Oceanic culture that arose as their issue is a culture informed by the art and knowledge of the ancient Mediterranean world. (*b*) The discoveries were not confined to the domain of geographical exploration; in these same years the place of the earth in the solar system was first scientifically determined by Copernicus. The learned world as well as the vulgar had hitherto accepted the Ptolemaic theory, with the earth as the centre of the universe; though we still think and speak in terms of that theory of the rising and setting of the sun, after the beginning of the sixteenth century such expressions remained merely a linguistic survival. It was in the spirit that had led Ptolemy and the ancient inquirers to their conclusions that Copernicus destroyed the Ptolemaic system. (*c*) The sixteenth century witnessed the birth not only of modern

astronomy and physics, but also the biological sciences. The anatomical researches of Vésalius (1543) formed the groundwork of a development that led to the great discoveries of Harvey in the following century. From the study of medicine, thus brilliantly inaugurated, arose the sciences of botany, zoology and physiology. (*d*) If, finally we consider man's moral and intellectual interests, we are confronted by the tremendous significance of the activity of the new spirit within this period in art, learning, politics and religion. The invention of printing, like the earlier inventions of the mariner's compass and the telescope in the exploration of Nature, was the potent instrument of the Revival of Learning in widening the intellectual horizon and in illuminating the spiritual vocation of man. A reading public came into being outside the limits of the university and the Church. The study of ancient languages and literatures, the unfettered exercise of critical reason on authorities and documents, reflected its results on all branches of knowledge.[1] It co-operated with the newly-stirred national spirit in Germany to bring about the Reformation. A fuller measure of knowledge undermined the claims and traditional interpretation of the mediaeval Church ; the appeal to the judgment of the individual layman substituted an entirely new criterion for the disciplinary authority that had governed the thought of the Middle Age. So arose, side by side, in the closing years of the fifteenth and the early years of the sixteenth centuries, a Humanistic culture, a revival of learning both in method and content, rational, critical and human, resting on the classics of Greece and Rome ; and an individualist revolt, displayed first in religion and

[1] It is interesting to note that the earliest opera, the *Euridice* of Jacopo Peri, performed in 1600 at Florence on the occasion of the marriage of Marie de Medici and Henry IV of France, claimed to be "founded on the declamation of the ancient Greeks."

later in philosophy. The spirit of private judgment that found utterance in Luther and Calvin gave birth in the succeeding century to the "*cogito ergo sum*" ("I think, therefore I am") which formed the foundation of Descartes' philosophy. Within the rigid circle of Protestant theology that spirit won but a negative and restricted expression; its full development must be looked for in the recognition of the supremacy of reason by the philosophic schools of the seventeenth century, by Descartes, Hobbes and Spinoza.

10. The spirit of the Revival of Learning and the intimate dependence of the Humanist ideal on classical antiquity—above all on the literature of Greece—found their most brilliant expression in the person of Erasmus of Rotterdam. Erasmus was, if not the greatest scholar, at all events the greatest man of letters of the Renaissance. Born about the year 1466, his life falls almost entirely within the period of which we have been speaking. Thrust at an early age into the uncongenial atmosphere of a Flemish monastery, Erasmus discovered his vocation as a scholar by the aid of the monastic library. In Paris he learnt and taught the Greek language, and laid the foundations of his fame as the leading Humanist in Europe. There, too, he made English friends; on his first visit to this country in 1498 he met Grocyn, Colet and More, the pioneers of the Revival of Learning in England. Favoured by Henry VIII and Archbishop Warham, he lectured at Cambridge, aided Colet in his foundation of St. Paul's School, and wrote his most brilliant satire on the ignorance and superstition of kings and clergy, the *Encomium Moriae* ("Praise of Folly"), at More's house in Chelsea. But Erasmus belonged strictly to no nation; his culture was European, and he made his home indifferently,

wherever in that turbulent age he could find a refuge, in Paris, London or Basel. His editions of the New Testament and of the Greek Fathers—at Basel he directed the work of Froben's press—evidence his enthusiasm for the Greek language. It had been so in the early days of poverty: "First I will buy some Greek books, and after that some clothes." His Proverbs (*Adagia*), Colloquies and Letters are rich in the learning of the ancient world. Both in his thought and in his style we see that the classical tongues were to him no dead languages, but a source of living inspiration. Above all he had caught the free spirit of Greece; by nature a free-lance, his life and writings display the energy and freedom of the Greek spirit, together with a wit and irony with which Lucian alone in antiquity could compare. The outbreak of the German Reformation brought him only sorrow and anxiety. He had poured the vials of his wit and learning upon the abuses and ignorance of the clergy, but he shrank before the prospect of confusion and anarchy opened out by Luther's breach with Rome. Religious strife and civil war were little to the taste of the Humanist scholar. He regarded the Reformation conflict with the natural conservatism of an intellectualist. Yet his intellectual criticism had served, no less than the ruder weapons of Luther, to undermine the authority of the Church. He, too, as well as Luther, had "hit the Pope on the crown, the monks on the belly"; "by his irony," wrote a contemporary, "he had injured the Roman pontiff more severely than had Luther by his wrath." In truth, Erasmus was a champion of liberty; his opposition to the Reformers was based not a little on his fear of their intellectual obscurantism. Thus amid the storms of political and social revolution he went down to the grave at Basel in 1536, distrusted alike by Catholic and Protestant. His fame for all ages is that of

an apostle of light and liberty. He was the intellectual forerunner of Montaigne and Voltaire, one who, impregnated with the true Hellenic spirit, trusted to reason and knowledge to guide and reform the world.

11. The history of the Revival of Learning shows how deep is the indebtedness of modern culture to that of antiquity. The stimulus to modern science and the ideal of modern education came alike from Greece and Rome. The New Learning had its home in Italy, the centre of Roman civilisation, where the relics of that civilisation had continuously survived to be reawakened by the breath of Greece in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. From the great commercial cities of Italy, above all from the Florence of the Medici, it spread northwards beyond the Alps, borne to Paris by the French invaders of Italy, and to Germany and Flanders along the commercial highway of the Rhine. Its strength lay always among the merchant classes in the great towns. From Flanders the new spirit passed into Britain. We have alluded already to the group of early English Humanists with whom Erasmus lived in friendly co-operation during his visits to this country. In the reign of Henry VII, Grocyn, Linacre and Colet journeyed to Italy to drink at the head-waters of the New Learning. The spirit of Humanism was planted among the traders of London—Colet and More were born in the City—and slowly spread during the sixteenth century through the schools and universities. Thus in England, as on the Continent, there was established a supremacy of classical studies in education that prevailed till the physical sciences, offspring of the same Hellenic revival, voiced their rival claims in the last half of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the influence of the revival penetrated beyond the walls of educational institutions. It inspired and moulded art and literature, political

thought, and practical affairs. We have already called attention to the circumstance that the two central facts of modern civilisation, the plays of Shakespeare and the French Revolution, were affected in no small measure by the examples of Greek and Roman character depicted in the pages of Plutarch. The parliamentary debates of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are full of classical allusion, as when Sir John Eliot branded Buckingham as a Sejanus, and Pitt cited Virgil in his famous appeal for the abolition of the slave trade. Oratory was modelled consciously on Demosthenes and Cicero. Artists were trained in the study of the antique; architects turned aside from the Gothic style of the later Middle Age to the classic monuments of the South; and there is scarcely a page of English poetry that does not bear the impress of the literature or the mythology of Greece and Rome.

CHAPTER XI

CONCLUSION: THE LIVING INTEREST OF ANCIENT CIVILISATION

§ 1. The historical and the living interest of Greece and Rome.
§ 2. Opposition of classical and scientific ideals of education.
§ 3. Human interest of Greek and Roman culture.
§ 4. The spirit that inspired Greek and Roman culture.
§ 5. In what sense that culture is "classical."
§ 6. The great men of Greece and Rome as enduring examples.
§ 7. Greek and Roman culture as a living source of inspiration to the modern world.

1. In our survey of ancient civilisation in the main body of this volume, and in the illustrations of its influence in the preceding chapter, our attention has been fixed on its historical effects on the life and culture of modern times. If we consider the civilisation amid which we live and move and have our being under any of its essential aspects—religion, law, government, knowledge, literature, or art—and ask, how did this structure come into being? we are led back, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly, to ancient Greece and Rome. That is the historical interest of ancient civilisation: it is the basis of our world, and since it is in relation to our world that we think and act, it is also the basis of our selves. But this historical interest is not the sole claim that Greece and Rome make upon our attention. If it were, they would be far less important factors in education and culture than is actually the case. It is always interesting to learn about our origins; but, after all, they belong to the bygone past, and it is in the present that

we have to live, and out of the present to create the future. The question arises, therefore, have the products of the ancient world a meaning and a value for the present, apart from the service they rendered in shaping it out of the past? Our answer is that they have; that they have an interest greater even than their historical interest, in that they are still active powers in moulding the thought and culture of the civilised world. A brief consideration of the living interest of Greece and Rome will form a fitting conclusion to this book.

2. That it was so in the age of the Renaissance we saw when speaking of Erasmus. For him, as for other intellectual leaders of his day, the Greek and Latin tongues were a living medium of thought and utterance. Hence came about the predominance of these languages in the history of modern education. To-day our attitude has somewhat changed. We are accustomed to talk of Greek and Latin as "dead" languages, because they are no longer spoken among men. Latin has ceased to be the recognised medium of writing among the learned, as in the time of the Renaissance. Again, we contrast classical and modern studies and oppose a scientific to a classical ideal of education. This is largely due to the fact that education in Greek and Latin came to mean a study of languages rather than of culture, and that the classical ideal of the Humanists became tarnished with pedantry and antiquarianism. The efforts of teachers were frequently confined to making their pupils compose bad imitations of classical models. Thus a breach inevitably arose between the discipline that seemed content to burrow in the past and that which trained the mind to analysis of the actual present and prediction of the future. But we have seen that modern science itself had its roots in the impulse that sprang from Greece; nor is

the lesson that the works of Greece and Rome are still powerful to teach one of sterile imitation of past history. Their intrinsic and original value is independent of chronology and remains untouched by the lapse of centuries. They subsist in their imperishable grandeur and beauty, now as two thousand years ago.

3. The appeal that the art, the philosophy, and the poetry of the Greeks make to mankind is at once permanent and universal. The frieze of the Parthenon, the tragedies of Sophocles and the dialogues of Plato are potent to ennoble and enlarge the mind of man to-day as in the hour of their first creation. Their worth is not to be measured by their antiquity or by their results. They are not ancient or modern, but great sculpture, thought and poetry. Moreover, the creations of the Greek and Roman genius are pervaded everywhere by universal human interest. The phrases "Humanism," "Humane learning," "the Humanities," point to this, that above all other races these two were gifted to interpret man, his emotions and actions, and the permanent spiritual interests of his nature. Man in relation to the world that forms the field of his activity, and the problems that arise out of the relation—this theme, the common concern of all ages and peoples, was handled with unequalled powers of insight and expression by the great writers of Greece and Rome. No races before these had even grasped the problem clearly, still less striven after a rational solution. No races before these had made man as he is the central theme of art and poetry. They were the first to restrain within the bounds of reason the element of caprice which is natural to man, and thus mould into reasonable forms the rude material of human nature. Their life and the varied products of their activity are always illuminated by the clear light of reason and an unerring sense for

form. Their creations in the fields of art and knowledge have the enduring and universal value of the ideas that they embody and represent.

4. Their value lies not only in the problem they interpret, but in the spirit in which they worked. We know something of the nature of that spirit: it was the spirit of freedom, freedom of thought and freedom of action. Human nature is two-sided, according as we regard man as engaged in knowledge or in action. His double effort is to know things as they are and to make them what they ought to be. He cannot do the one without the other. On the one hand if knowledge is to steer clear of the illusory and the fantastic, it must be closely related to practical activity. Here is the strength of Greek thought in contrast with Oriental; it was not the monopoly of a caste or school of visionaries living in seclusion from the world, but owed its origin and progress to individual thinkers bred in the atmosphere of the independent city-state. Freedom of life conditioned throughout the development of free inquiry. In the event, the philosophy and science, the art and poetry of Greece, died with the death of political liberty. On the other hand, if practical achievement is to be fruitful in moulding the civilisation of after-ages, it must rest on knowledge of what is. Greeks and Romans alike set themselves to see and understand things as they are; both alike were singularly free, in speculation and in action, from the pursuit of shadows and illusions. To know oneself and the world, and on the basis of this knowledge fearlessly to realise the ideal of human excellence, was the goal both of their greatest thinkers and their greatest men of action. It is because of this clear grasp of realities and free exercise of reason that the writings and deeds of the great minds of Greece and

Rome form an enduring inspiration and example to after-ages.

5. The besetting temptation of modern Humanism is to regard the classics of antiquity not as fountains of fresh inspiration but as models for slavish imitation. Against such a narrow and sterile servility the romantic movements in modern art and poetry and the revolt of modern science are a protest. When we speak of the literature and art of Greece and Rome as "classical," the term is apt to convey misleading associations. It suggests at once the opposition between the "classical" and the "romantic." We think of the dry prosaic standards of the eighteenth century, when the *Poetics* of Aristotle had become a storehouse of dogmas for dramatic criticism and the "unities" were all in all. The results of this dogmatic pedantry were laughable enough and provoked the reaction of the Romantics in Germany against the "classicism" of France. Voltaire had written a *Philoctetes*, in which the plot of Sophocles' immortal masterpiece had been adapted to the taste of Parisian society by the insertion of a heroine and her chaperone. It was high time that Goethe led the revolt in the name at once of Shakespeare and of the living spirit of Greece herself. For the great poets of Greece and Rome stand on a height far above the antithesis of "classical" and "romantic"; their works are "classics" in the sense in which all great art is "classical," as enrolled among the master-creations of the human mind.

6. The central personalities of Greek and Roman history have a similar value for the present day. They present types of great and heroic action, not for mimicry, but as examples. Pericles and Alexander, Scipio and Caesar, are more than makers of history; they live not merely as themes for students of antiquity, but as ideals of

energetic personality. The history of the past may be studied both for the sake of knowledge and for the sake of action. Those who study for the sake of action use the inspiration which they draw from the record of the past to inform and guide them in building up the future. When Alexander nourished his imagination on the *Iliad*, it was to draw inspiration for his own achievement from the deeds of famous men. It was in a like spirit that Napoleon studied Caesar. The secret of Plutarch's unique influence lies in this, that he portrayed with wonderful charm and insight the characters of men of action in the past for the men of action of after-time. No national history is so rich in such examples as that of Greece and Rome; for no other peoples produced such a store of gifted individuals or recorded their achievement in such splendid monuments of literature.

7. Thus it is that the civilised world of to-day still breathes the atmosphere of Greek and Roman culture. It will be so as long as civilisation lasts. In each succeeding age, artists, poets and thinkers turn to this perennial spring of inspiration to draw strength and vitality for their own creative effort. History never repeats itself; and what the Greeks and Romans achieved in their generation will never be done again. The art and the philosophy of the present and the future must express the life of the present and the future, not that of the past. They must be creative and original, like the life which they interpret to the world. It is just because of this that the examples of Greece and Rome are of supreme and enduring value. Inspired by living energy and the desire for truth and beauty, they breathe that spirit into those who know and love them. They speak a universal message, not for the scholar only but for all who have ears to hear it. It is only for the pedant and

the antiquarian that it has ceased to bear a meaning. It means most to those who labour with strength and courage to create the future, whether in art or science, thought or action, for such share most fully the spirit that inspired it. This is the secret of the living power that Greece and Rome still wield over the peoples of to-day. When artists cease to draw life from the Pheidian sculptures, when thinkers cease to find in Plato the living movement of the human spirit in its unwearied search for truth, when poets no longer turn, as Dante and Milton turned, to Homer and Virgil as to the wellsprings of poetic inspiration,—then, and then only, will the Greek and Roman tongues be dead.

APPENDIX

CHRONOLOGICAL CHART TO ILLUSTRATE CHAPTER II

	Egypt.	Aegean Area.	Asia Minor.	Syria and Palestine.	Euphrates and Tigris Valley.
Before 2000	The Old Kingdom (Memphis). Unification of Egypt. Middle Kingdom rises (Thebes).	Cretan civilisation (Minoan Age).			Semitic settlement.
	12th dyn. Shepherd-Kings.	Decline of Cretan civilisation.			Babylonian Empire (Khammurabi).
1750		Rise of Mycenaean civilisation.	Hittite Empire.		
1500	New Empire (Thebes). 18th dyn. Syria and Phoenicia conquered. Hittite Wars.		Decline of Hittites before Egypt and Assyria.	Sidon leads in Phoenicia. Israelites from Egypt.	c. 1300, rise of Assyria.
1250	19th dyn	Decline of Mycenaean civilisation.			Conquer Babylon.
	Decline of the New Empire. Invasions of sea peoples.			The Hebrew Judges.	Assyrian Empire.
1000	Delta dynasties arise. Shishak conquers Palestine.	Dorian invasion of Greece.		Tyre replaces Sidon. Empire of David. Phoenician colonies in Africa.	Assyrians conquer Hittites, Syria, Palestine, Egypt.
750	672, Esarhaddon conquers Egypt.	Colonisation of Aegean islands and Asia Minor.	Lydian power. Cimmerian incursion.	721, Assyria conquers Israel.	From 625, Babylonia and Media. Conquest of Assyria.
500	610–525, 26th dyn. 525, Cambyses conquers Egypt.	Asiatic Greeks subject to Persia. 480–450 liberation of Aegean and Asiatic Greeks.	Lydia conquered by Persia.	586, Babylonia conquers Judah. The Persian Empire.	Babylonia conquers Palestine. Persian conquest.
300	332, Alexander conquers Egypt.		330, Fall of Persian Empire before Alexander.	Persian Empire.	

Chapter II

The reader who desires fuller acquaintance with the history and civilisation of the peoples referred to in this chapter is advised to consult the articles (especially on "Egypt," "Babylonia and Assyria" "Aegean Civilisation") in the eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. A bibliography is appended to each article. For an account of Schliemann and his work, see Schuchhardt's *Schliemann's Excavations* and Tsountas and Monatt's *Mycenæan Age*. On Crete, see Hawes's *Crete, The Forerunner of Greece* (Harper. 2*s.* 6*d.*). Above all, visit the monuments in the British Museum with the aid of the cheap and well-illustrated guide-books to the different collections.[1]

§ 8. On the history and religion of Israel, see Wellhausen, *History of Israel and Judah*.

§ 18. I have of necessity stated this conclusion somewhat generally. I do not mean to deny that the Greeks received stimulus from earlier and foreign civilisations. My point is that the use which the Greeks made of the material was entirely creative and original. It is this that marked them off so clearly from other peoples; it is on this that the value of Greek civilisation rests. On their originality in science and philosophy, see Burnet, *Early Greek Philosophy*, second edition, pp. 17–27. The Greek thinkers owed nothing of serious value in science to Egypt or Babylon, for the excellent reason that neither Egypt nor Babylon had anything of serious value to contribute. As for India, as Burnet points out, Indian philosophy is indebted to that of Greece rather than Greek philosophy to that of India.

[1] Parties are shown round by an admirable official guide.

Chapter III

The best modern textbook of Greek history is Bury, *History of Greece*. For fuller detail Holm's *Greek History* should be consulted. See also the large Histories of Greece by Grote and Thirlwall. Dickinson's *Greek View of Life*, Butcher's *Harvard Lectures on Greek Subjects*, W. R. Hardie's *Lectures on Classical Subjects*, and Mahaffy's *What have the Greeks done for Modern Civilisation?* contain suggestive and interesting studies of Greek literature and life.

§ 3. On the city-state the reader should consult Warde Fowler: *The City-State of the Greeks and Romans*. Plato's *Republic* and the first book of Aristotle's *Politics* show what Greek philosophers thought about the necessity and the value of the "polis" for the good life. Further references are given in Warde Fowler's book, which also illustrates the growth of the city-state from the early history of Athens and Rome.

§§ 5 *et sqq.*: On the expansion of Greece consult Bury and Holm.

§ 6. On the rivalry of the old aristocracies and the new plutocracies see the poems of Theognis, who writes as a champion of the former. Extracts are translated in J. A. Symonds' *Greek Poets*. Read the accounts of Tyranny at Corinth, at Athens (Peisistratus) and Samos (Polycrates) in Herodotus (tr. by Rawlinson in *Everyman* Series).

§ 7. On the general history of Greek Literature consult Jebb, *Primer of Greek Literature* (Macmillan); Gilbert Murray, *History of Greek Literature*; J. A. Symonds, *Greek Poets* (2 vols.). On Homer consult Jebb, *Introduction to Homer* (Macmillan), and Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*. The *Iliad* has been well

translated by Lang, Leaf and Myers and the *Odyssey* by Butcher and Lang. Leaf's *Companion* to the above-mentioned translation of the *Iliad* will be found of great service.

§§ 11 *et sqq.*: On early Greek philosophy consult Burnet's *Early Greek Philosophers* and Gomperz's *Greek Thinkers* (vol. i). Adamson's *Development of Greek Philosophy* is recommended on the whole subject.

§ 14. On the religious revival see Burnet, Gomperz, and Adam's *Religious Thought in Greece*.

Chapter IV

§§ 1–5. On the history of the age consult Bury and Holm, as before. Grote, in his great *History of Greece*, vindicates democratic institutions and justifies the general policy of the Athenian democracy. It is an error to disparage the character of that democracy in the fourth century. Read the translations of Herodotus and Thucydides in *Everyman* Series. Read what Plato says about democracy—with reference to Athens—in *Republic*, books vi and viii, and about timocracy—with reference to Sparta—in book viii. On the economic side of Athenian history see A. E. Zimmern, *The Greek Commonwealth*.

§§ 6, 7. Little has been said in this book about Greek art, and for two reasons. No brief description of the history of art gives any idea of its value; and the great creations of Greek sculptors are visible to all in the British Museum. It is there that the reader must supplement what is wanting in this volume. The official handbooks give excellent assistance. E. A. Gardner's *Handbook of Greek Sculpture* is also recommended.

§§ 8–10. Consult the histories of literature already

referred to. Butcher's *Aristotle's Theory of Fine Art* contains a translation of Aristotle's treatise on Poetry and excellent essays. Every reader should study the Greek drama in translations. The following are recommended: *Aeschylus* by W. and C. E. S. Headlam, *Sophocles* by Whitelaw, *Euripides* (single plays) by Murray. If a selection is to be made, read Aeschylus' Trilogy—the *Oresteia*—and *Prometheus Bound*, Sophocles' *Oedipus King*, *Antigone* and *Philoctetes*, Euripides' *Medea*, *Hippolytus*, *Alcestis*, *Hercules* (the last two are translated by Browning in his *Balaustion's Adventure* and *Aristophanes' Apology*), Aristophanes' *Acharnians*, *Frogs*, *Clouds*, *Knights*, *Birds*, *Wasps*. The last-named comedies contain much of political as well as of literary interest. Most of them have been well translated by Hookham Frere.

§§ 11–14. On the Sophists and Socrates consult the chapters under these titles in Grote's *History of Greece*, and Holm's chapter on the New Culture and Gomperz's *Greek Thinkers* (vol. ii). Read certainly Plato's *Apology*, *Symposium* and the closing scene of the *Phaedo*. Xenophon's *Memorabilia* are well translated by Dakyns. The reader of Plato must bear in mind that the Socrates of the dialogues is a *dramatis persona*, and that Plato, while he preserves the spirit of Socrates' personality and teaching, puts his own thoughts into his mouth. Xenophon's account of Socrates is more prosaic and less trustworthy.

§ 15. Plato's dialogues have been translated in their entirety by Jowett (5 vols.). The reader is advised to study first the dialogues referred to in the preceding note, together with the *Protagoras*, the *Gorgias*, and, above all, the *Republic*. The following translations may be obtained at small cost in the *Golden Treasury* Series:—

(1) *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito* and *Phaedo* (in Church's *Trial and Death of Socrates*); (2) *Lysis, Phaedrus* and *Protagoras* (trans. Wright); (3) *Republic* (trans. by Davies and Vaughan and by Lindsay). Jowett's translation of the four first-mentioned dialogues is also published separately at a small cost. It is much to be regretted that no cheap and good translation of the *Gorgias* is available. On Plato see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* (vols. ii and iii); Nettleship, *Lectures and Remains*—(the long essay in vol. i); Adam's *Religious Teachers of Greece.* The best aids to the study of the *Republic* are Nettleship's *Lectures on the Republic* and the same writer's essay in *Hellenica* on "The Theory of Education in the Republic of Plato."

Chapter V

§§ 1–5. On Alexander, see Hogarth, *Philip and Alexander.* On the work of his successors, Bevan, *House of Seleucus*, Mahaffy, *The Progress of Hellenism in Alexander's Empire.* Holm's *History of Greece* (vols. iii and iv) is excellent on the whole period. Butcher's *Demosthenes* (*Classical Writers* Series) is recommended.

§§ 6–8. The reader should certainly study Theocritus (translated by A. Lang in the *Golden Treasury* Series). One of the Idylls is well translated by Matthew Arnold in *Essays in Criticism* (essay on "Pagan and Mediaeval Religious Sentiment").

§§ 9–12. On Aristotle, see Gomperz, *Greek Thinkers* (vol. iv); Zeller, *Aristotle and the Aristotelian Schools* (2 vols.). The beginner may find in Dante the stimulus to an interest in Aristotle's philosophy. It must be borne in mind that Dante interpreted Aristotle in the light of much that was not Aristotelian. The *Ethics* are translated by Chase (*Everyman* Series) and Peters, the *Politics*

by Welldon and by Jowett (*Everyman* Series). Readers are advised to begin the study of Aristotle with the *Ethics*. The introductory volume to Newman's edition of the *Politics* is also recommended. On the Stoics and Epicureans see Zeller, *Stoics, Epicureans and Sceptics*, and Wallace, *Epicureanism*.

Chapter VI

The best textbooks of Roman history are those of Wells (*Short History of Rome*), and How and Leigh. Pelham's article on Roman History in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* is specially recommended; it has been published as a separate volume (*Outline of Roman History*). Of larger works, Mommsen's *History* is by far the best, both as a record of fact and for interpretation of Roman character, institutions and civilisation. Montesquieu's *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*, written in the first half of the eighteenth century, while accepting much that has since been proved unhistorical, is full of pregnant and profound observations on Roman character and institutions.

§§ 1–3. The reader should realise that many of the facts recorded and believed by the Romans in regard to their early history are unhistorical: *e. g.* many of the legends of the earlier kings. As remarked in the text, the scanty records that existed in Rome prior to 390 B.C. were destroyed in that year by the Gauls. The modern works mentioned above will show what can be inferred as to early Roman history. Warde Fowler's *City-State of the Greeks and Romans* will be found suggestive on early constitutional history.

§ 9. Bevan's *House of Seleucus* may be referred to in addition to the works previously named.

§§ 12, 13. On the history of Roman literature consult Mackail's short history of *Latin Literature*.

§§ 14, 15. On these paragraphs and on the opening paragraphs of chapter vii consult also Greenidge, *A History of Rome from 133 B.C.*

Chapter VII

On the period 133 B.C.–27 B.C. consult, in addition to general histories, the work of Greenidge already referred to, Strachan-Davidson's *Cicero* (Heroes of the Nations Series), Warde Fowler's *Caesar* (Heroes of the Nations Series) and *Roman Life in the days of Cicero*, Ferrero, *The Greatness and Decline of Rome*, and (on Augustus) Merivale's *History of the Romans under the Empire*. Froude's *Caesar* is a brilliantly written sketch, but his narrative and interpretation must be read with caution. Above all Mommsen's *History* should be studied on this period. Select letters of Cicero have been excellently translated by Jeans (Macmillan), with brief explanatory comments: no student of the period should fail to read them. Plutarch's *Lives* contain biographies of the leading actors in the struggle. On Caesar's campaigns in Gaul, consult T. Rice Holmes' *Caesar's Conquest of Gaul*. Caesar's narrative of the *Gallic War* should also be read in Rice Holmes' translation.

§§ 6–7. Mommsen's *Roman Provinces under the Empire* furnishes a series of brilliant sketches of the history of each province up to the time of Diocletian (end of the third century A.D.), based largely on the vast collection of contemporary inscriptions. It is not too much to say that the study of these inscriptions has for the first time rendered possible a history of the imperial régime.

§ 8. Readers are advised to become acquainted with Cicero first through his letters—see above—rather than through his speeches or other writings. On Lucretius

and Catullus, see Mackail's *Latin Literature.* Lucretius has been translated by Bailey.

§ 9. See Virgil's *Aeneid* should be read in Mackail's prose translation. On post-Augustan literature see Mackail, and H. E. Butler's *Post-Augustan poetry.*

§ 11. See the Essay on *Virgil* in F. W. H. Myers' Essays.

Chapters VIII, IX

On the Decline and Fall the great work of Edward Gibbon should form for all readers the basis of study. It has recently been re-edited with notes by Bury. Consult also Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire* and—on the Barbarian invasions—Hodgkin, *Italy and her Invaders.* On the Eastern portion of the Empire, consult Bury and Finlay, *History of Greece.* The following works will also be found valuable—Dill, *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius;* Stuart Jones, *Roman Empire* (Story of the Nations); Renan, *Les Origines de Christianisme* (especially the volume on Marcus Aurelius); Bryce, *The Holy Roman Empire.* The last-named book gives an admirable summary of the origin, growth and theory of the Mediaeval Empire.

§§ 6–9. Consult: Harnack, *The Expansion of Christianity in the First Three Centuries*; Hatch, *The Influence of Greek Ideas and Usages upon the Christian Church*; Ramsay, *The Church in the Roman Empire*; Harnack, *History of Dogma*; Bigg, *The Church's Task under the Roman Empire.*

§§ 10–13. Consult Zeller and Wallace, previously referred to, R. D. Hicks' *Stoics and Epicureans*; and, above all, translations of Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Lightfoot's essay on "St. Paul and Seneca" in his edition of St. Paul's *Epistle to the Philippians*, and F. W. H. Myers' essay on *Greek Oracles* will be found of interest.

Chapter IX

Consult Gibbon, Bury and Bryce: also Hodgkin, *Charlemagne* (Foreign Statesmen Series) and Davis' *Charlemagne* (Heroes of the Nations); Dante's *De Monarchia* ("Concerning Monarchy") and the closing cantos of the *Purgatorio* should be read by all. The works of Dante are all translated in the *Temple Classics*.

§ 7. The buildings at Ravenna and St. Mark's at Venice illustrate the influence of Byzantine art in Italy.

Chapter X

§ 3. On Roman Britain see the chapter in Mommsen's *Provinces under the Empire* and (especially) Haverfields' article on "Roman Britain" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. A list of authorities is appended to the article. The same writer's work, *The Romanisation of Roman Britain* (Publications of the British Academy) should be consulted.

§ 4. See Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* and, on the Church in the East, Bury's *Later Roman Empire*.

§ 5. On the influence of Aristotle on mediaeval thought see the works of Dante.

§§ 7–8. On the Renaissance and Revival of Learning see Creighton, *History of the Papacy*.

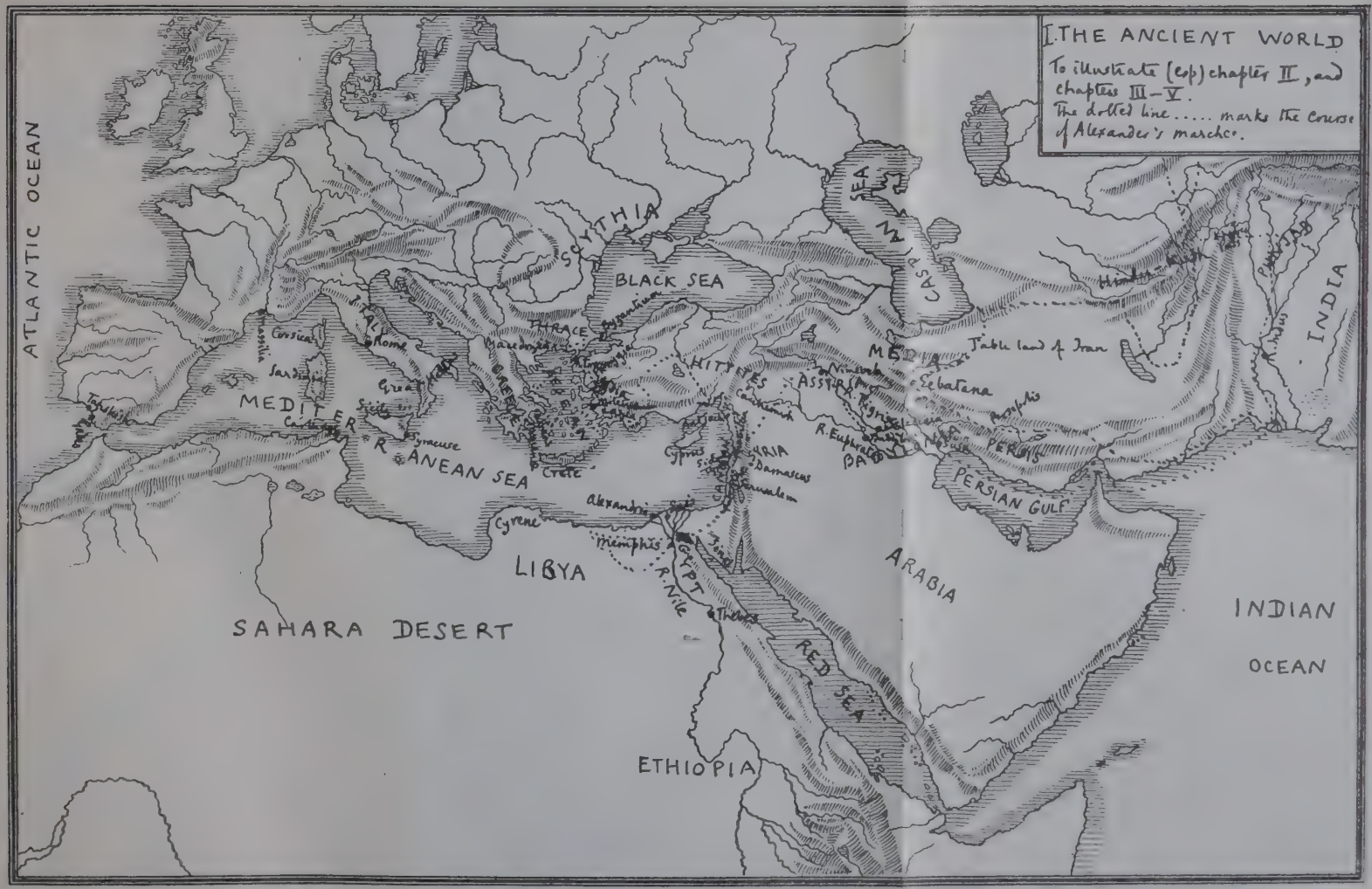
§§ 9–10. On Erasmus and the Revival of Learning in England, consult Seebohm's *Oxford Reformers* and Froude's *Erasmus*, and P. S. Allen's *Selections from Erasmus* (with a brief life).

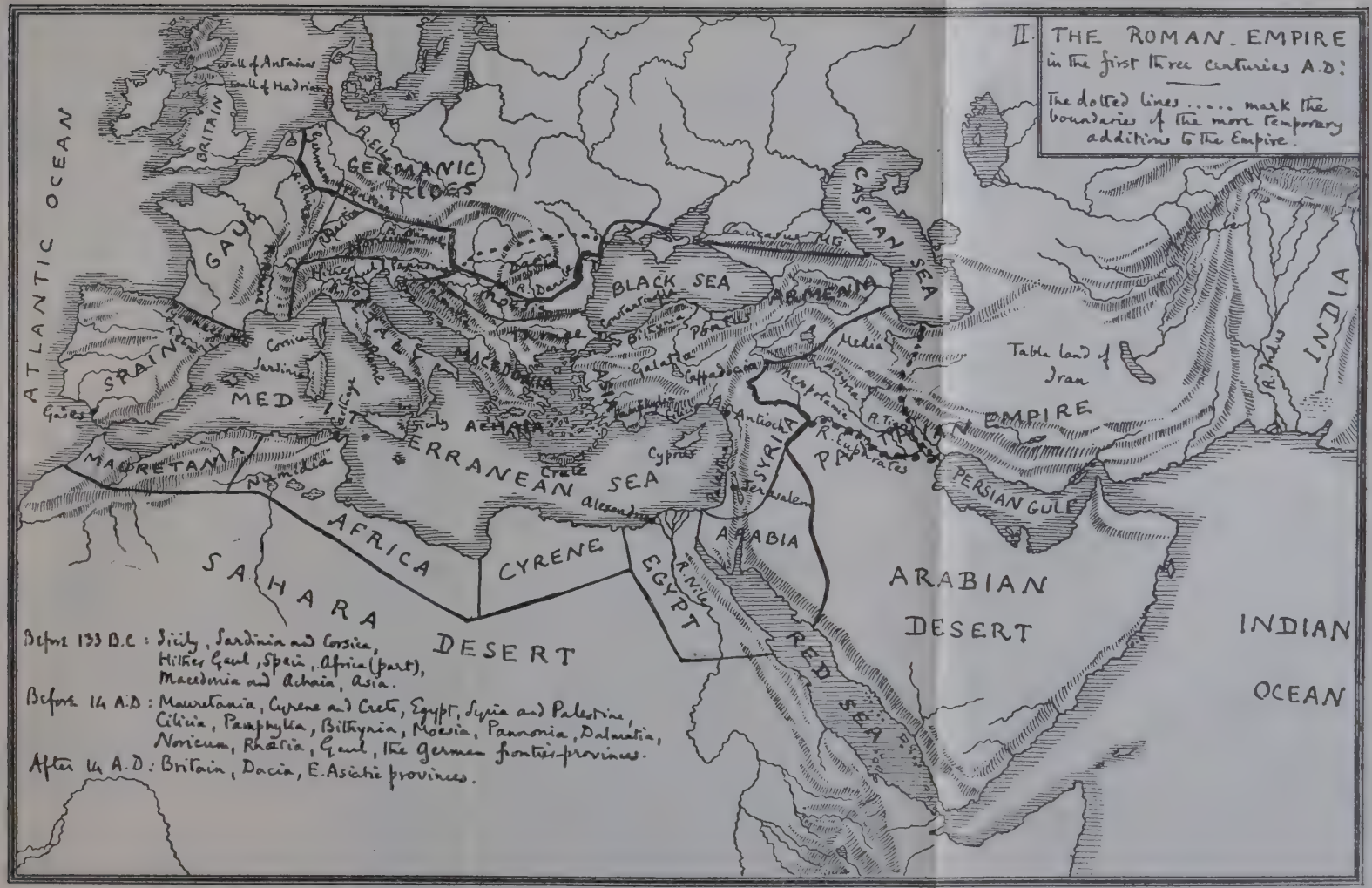
MAPS

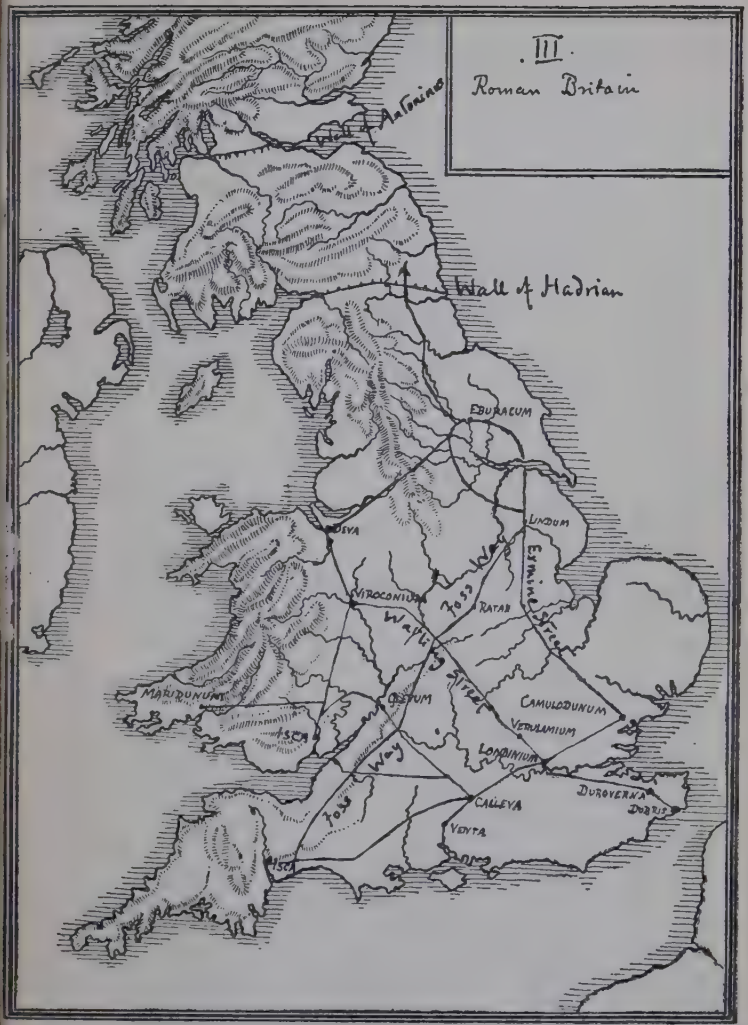
NOTE TO MAP OF ROMAN BRITAIN (XV)

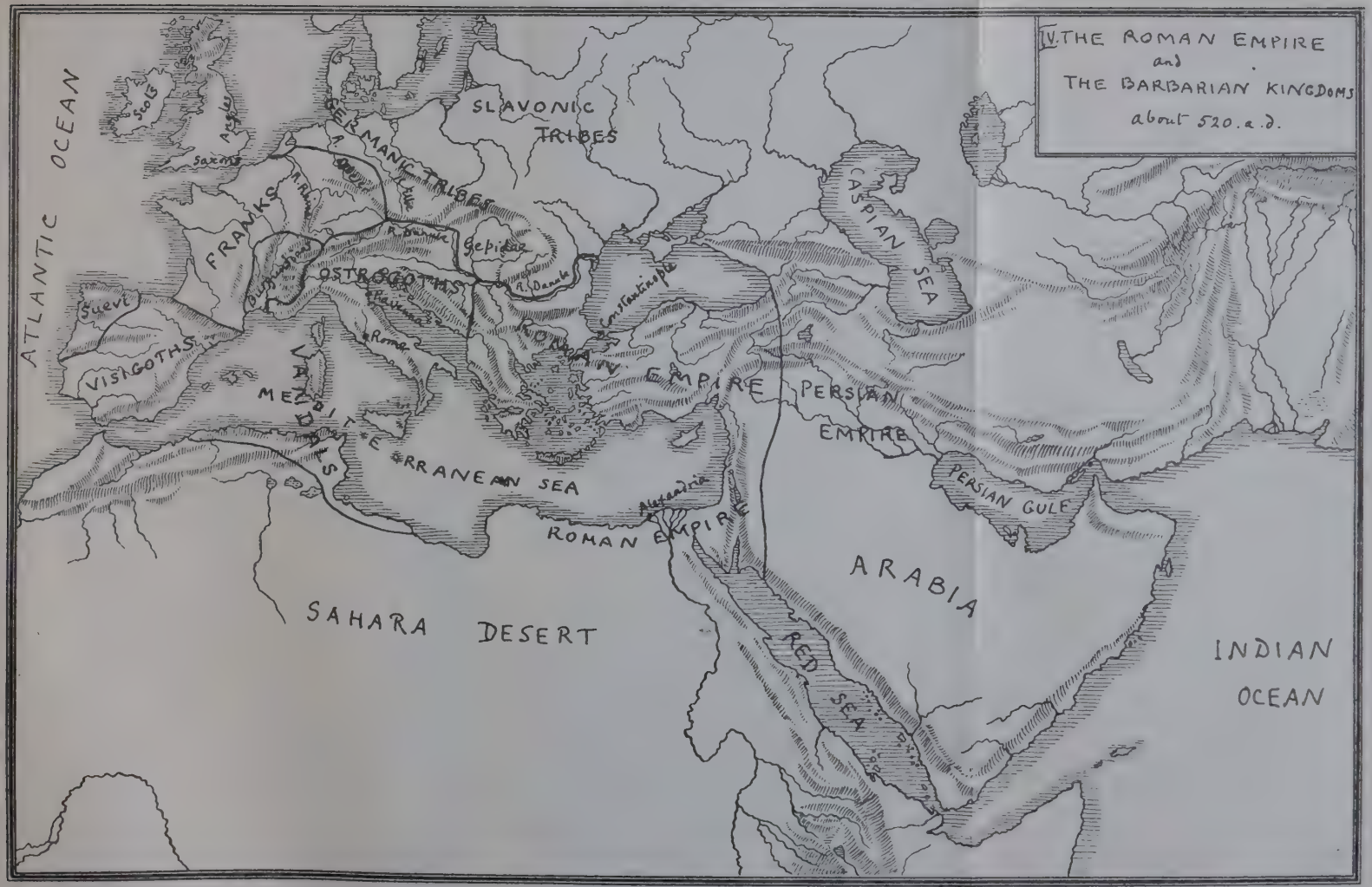
It will be understood that this map is only a sketch, and that the places marked in it represent only a selection of the more important sites which have been identified. The roads are intended to illustrate the chief lines of communication in the Roman period.

Londinium—London.
Duroverna—Canterbury.
Dubris—Dover.
Calleva—Silchester.
Venta—Winchester.
Isca—Exeter.
Eburacum—York.
Ratae—Leicester.
Verulamium—St. Albans.
Camulodunum—Colchester.
Glevum—Gloucester.
Viroconium—Wroxeter.
Maridunum—Carmarthen.
Deva—Chester.
Lindum—Lincoln.
Isca—Caerleon.


I. THE ANCIENT WORLD
To illustrate (esp) chapter II, and chapters III–V.
The dotted line ..... marks the course of Alexander's marches.
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SCYTHIA
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
INDIA
HINDU KUSH
Table land of Iran
MEDIA
Ecbatana
Susa
PERSIA
PERSIAN GULF
HITTITES
ASSYRIA
R. Euphrates
BABYLONIA
Damascus
Jerusalem
Cyprus
Crete
THRACE
Byzantium
Troy
Sardis
Corsica
Rome
ITALY
Syracuse
Sicily
Carthage
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Alexandria
Cyrene
Memphis
EGYPT
R. Nile
Thebes
LIBYA
SAHARA DESERT
ARABIA
RED SEA
INDIAN OCEAN
ETHIOPIA


II. THE ROMAN EMPIRE in the first three centuries A.D.
The dotted lines ..... mark the boundaries of the more temporary additions to the Empire.
ATLANTIC OCEAN
BRITAIN
Wall of Antonine
Wall of Hadrian
GERMANIC TRIBES
GAUL
SPAIN
MED
ITERRANEAN SEA
MAURETANIA
NUMIDIA
AFRICA
SAHARA DESERT
CYRENE
EGYPT
ACHAIA
MACEDONIA
BLACK SEA
CASPIAN SEA
ARMENIA
Media
Table land of Iran
INDIA
EMPIRE
SYRIA
Antioch
Jerusalem
ARABIA
ARABIAN DESERT
PERSIAN GULF
RED SEA
INDIAN OCEAN
Before 133 B.C: Sicily, Sardinia and Corsica, Hither Gaul, Spain, Africa (part), Macedonia and Achaia, Asia.
Before 14 A.D: Mauretania, Cyrene and Crete, Egypt, Syria and Palestine, Cilicia, Pamphylia, Bithynia, Moesia, Pannonia, Dalmatia, Noricum, Rhaetia, Gaul, the German frontier-provinces.
After 14 A.D: Britain, Dacia, E. Asiatic provinces.


III.
Roman Britain
Wall of Hadrian
EBURACUM
LINDUM
DEVA
VIROCONIUM
RATAE
Watling Street
Fosse Way
Ermine Street
MARIDUNUM
ISCA
ISCA
CAMULODUNUM
VERULAMIUM
LONDINIUM
DUROVERNA
DUBRIS
CALLEVA
VENTA


V. THE ROMAN EMPIRE
and
THE BARBARIAN KINGDOMS
about 520. a.d.
ATLANTIC OCEAN
SLAVONIC TRIBES
GERMANIC TRIBES
FRANKS
OSTROGOTHS
Gepidæ
Suevi
VISIGOTHS
VANDALS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
ROMAN EMPIRE
EASTERN EMPIRE
PERSIAN EMPIRE
CASPIAN SEA
PERSIAN GULF
ARABIA
RED SEA
SAHARA DESERT
INDIAN OCEAN

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